Transmission of The Mahabharata Tradition

C. R. Deshpande

Studies in Indian and Asian Civilizations

Editor

S. C. Malik

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Vyāsa and Vyasīds

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Indian Institute of Advanced Study Simla

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To my wife

but for whose cooperation this work would not have been possible

This book belongs to
Ramesh Rana

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Preface

I undertook the present study with the idea of scrutinizing the deviations of the two main Recensions and the individual Versions from the Constituted Text so as to bring out sharply the contribution of various provinces of India to the *Mahābhārata* Tradition, but it was found subsequently that such deviations were far and few between, the redactors mainly conforming to the basic Tradition. Consequently, important additions made by the many Vyasīds to the main corpus were taken up for study and these have been analyzed and presented here in the hope that even where a particular Vyasīd is emphasizing the matter that already exists in the main corpus, the cultural background behind such additions will get revealed.

By the main corpus, I mean the Constituted Text of the *Critical Edition of the Mahābhārata* (later referred to as *Critical Edition*) published by the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona. The *Critical Edition* has been recognized by almost all scholars all over the world as representing the form which the poem had before its became familiar throughout India, and the soundness of the principles of Textual Criticism evolved by Dr. V. S. Sukthankar specially for the *Mahābhārata* has also been accepted on all hands. So I have taken the constituted Text as my basis and compared and contrasted it with the additions found in the Recensions and Versions.

Star and appendix passages have been signified by the star* and cross† signs respectively in the present monograph.

I am highly indebted to Professor S. C. Dube, Director IIAS, for the kind interest he has been taking in this work. I am grateful to Dr. T. G. Mainkar, my revered Guru, Dr. Bhandarkar, Professor of Sanskrit and Head of the Department of Sanskrit and Prakrit Languages, University of Bombay, to Dr. G. V. Devasthali of

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—C. R. Deshpande

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTORY

Over the years of its existence the *Mahābhārata* has been playing a very important role not only in the lives of the people of India but also in the lives of the peoples of South East Asia. As Oldenberg puts it, "in the *Mahābhārata* breathe the united soul of India and the individual souls of her people". Dr. V. S. Sukthankar says, "Whether we realise it or not, it remains a fact that we in India still stand under the spell of the *Mahābhārata*. There is many a different strand that is woven in the thread of our civilization, reaching back into hoary antiquity. Amidst the deepest of them there is more than one that is drawn originally from the ancient Bhāratavarṣa and Sanskrit literature. And well in the centre of this vast pile of Sanskrit literature stands this monumental book of divine inspiration....".[1] The same scholar speaks eloquently on this topic at another place thus, "Next to the Vedas, it is the most valuable product of the entire literature of ancient India, so rich in notable works. Venerable for its very antiquity, it is one of the most inspiring monuments of the World and an inexhaustible mine for the investigation of the religion, mythology, legend, philosophy, law, custom and political and social institutions of ancient India....".[2]

The *Mahābhārata* has not only influenced the literature, art, sculpture, and painting of India but it has also moulded the very character of the Indian people. Characters from the Great Epic like Bhīṣma, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Karṇa, Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīma, Arjuna, Abhimanyu, Duryodhana, Duḥśāsana, Śalya, Kuntī, Gāndhārī, Draupadī, etc, are still household words and serve the purpose of driving home in a pithy manner the point that the speaker wants to

[1] *On the Meaning of Mahābhārata. Asiatic Society of Bombay*, Bombay (1937); p. 32. Later referred to as *Meaning of Mahābhārata*, Bombay (1937).

[2] *Sukthankar Memorial Edition, Vol.* 5. Karnatak Publishing House, Bombay (1944), pp. 12-13. Later referred to as *Sukthankar Memorial*.

convey. These characters stand for domestic or public virtues like filial love, fraternal attachment, generosity, steadfastness of purpose or vices like hatred, wickedness, faithlessness, etc. Call a man Bhīṣma, Karṇa or Abhimanyu and any Indian will immediately understand your estimate of the character of the person concerned.

And Kṛṣṇa! like the blue sky pervading the whole earth, Kṛṣṇa has been dominating the life of every Hindu in every stage of life for the last 2500 years at least. Whether a child, a brother, a lover, a champion, a politician, a philosopher, a warrior, everyone is expected to look upon Kṛṣṇa as his model. Dramas, poems, novels, short-stories have been inspired by the episodes from the *Mahābhārata* right from the days of Bhāsa (circa B.C. 400) down to the twentieth century in Sanskrit, Prakrit, and all the modern Indian languages. In India a philosophical or even political controversy can hardly be found that has no reference to the thought of the *Mahābhārata*. "The grand legends of the Great War are even now recited and expounded in Kings' palaces and in peasants' huts to an enraptured audience".[1] "Indeed, the characters and incidents of these two, (the *Rāmāyana* and *Mahābhārata*,) *itihas* as have come to be raw material for the works of numerous poets and saints that came later to write dramas and sing poems and hymns to keep this nation in the straight Path".[2]

> Also, Men and women in India from one end of the country to the other, whether young or old, whether rich or poor, whether high or low, whether simple or sophisticated, still derive entertainment, inspiration and guidance from the *Mahābhārata*. In times of stress and trial, the *Mahābhārata* has given consolation and brought a message of hope as much to an illiterate villager as to an experienced statesman. Indian writers, ancient and modern, have found in the stories of the great epic excellent vehicles for the expression of their creative genius. There is indeed no department of Indian life, public or private, which is not effectively influenced by the great epic. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the people of India have learnt to think and act in terms of the *Mahābhārata*.[3]

[1] *Meaning of Mahābhārata*, Bombay, (1937). p. 29

[2] Rajagopalachari, C., *Mahābhārat*. Bhartiya Vidya Bhawan, Bombay (7th edn) 1965, preface p. 12. Later referred to as *Rajaji's Mahābhārata*.

[3] R. N. Dandekar, *The Mahābhārata : Origin and Growth*. University of Ceylon Review Vol XII. p. 66.

The *Mahābhārata* is equally popular in Burma, Siam, Java, and Bali. Its influence can be discerned from temple walls of these countries which have stories from this epic sculptured on their walls. Artists in these countries have painted them on their canvasses and showmen act them in their *lakons* in Java, a particular *lakon* being played on a particular occasion in the family.[1]

As time passed, it became traditional to look upon the *Mahābhārata* as a Śāstra on piety, pleasure, and prosperity and passages to this effect were interpolated in the Text itself.[2]

(ii) Its Extent

In size, the *Mahābhārata* is a veritable 'literary monster'. It is computed to be four times as large as its sister epic, the *Rāmāyaṇa* of Vālmīki, eight times the *Iliad* and the *Odessey* put together and three and a half times the entire Bible".[3] Traditionally it is supposed to be running into 100,000 couplets *ślokas* or 200,000 lines—*Śatasāhasrī Samhitā*. However references to the *Mahābhārata* consisting of 100,000 verses are found only in passages proved to be spurious by the *Critical Edition*,[4] though inscriptions of the fifth century A.D. refer to the *Mahābhārata* as a sacred text-book offering religious discourse on the whole not essentially different in extent and contents from the work as we have it at present.[5] Express mention of the *Mahābhārata* as 'a collection of a hundred thousand verses' is found in a land grant belonging to this period.[6] But actually according to the critical Edition published by the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, it contains some 73,900 couplets. The northen recension contains 82,136 stanzas and the southern one 95,585 stanzas.[7]

[1] B. R. Chatterji, *Cultural Heritage of India*, (Vol II). Ramakrishna Mission Calcutta, p. 119-32. Later referred to as *Cultural Heritage*.

[2] I 186* K_6 V_1 B_2. Dn D 2 6 (marg).

[3] E. P. Rice, *Mahābhārata : Analysis and Index*, Oxford. (1934). preface xi. (Later referred to as *Rice's Analysis of Mahābhārata*).

[4] I 27* K_6 Dr D34 (marg) 6-12,145 and I 30* K_1. 4-6 V_1 B D (except D14, D13 missing) G7 T1.

[5] M. Winternitz, *History of Indian Literature*. Delhi. Vol. I, p. 407. (Later referred to as *History of Indian Literature* Delhi).

[6] ibid. p. 407. Macdonell p. 287.

[7] P. L. Vaidya, *Cultural Heritage* Calcutta. Vol. II, p. 52.

The method of counting *ślokas* is controversial. *Śloka* is technically the name given to a stanza in the *Austubh* meter in which every quarter consists of eight syllables. It would therefore be logical to ask : When it is said that the *Mahābhārata* consists of a hundred thousand *ślokas* are we to hold the statement to the letter? Dr. S. K. Belvalkar speaks of the following three methods of counting *ślokas* in his article on "the interpretation of the *Parvasaṅgraha* figures".[1]

(i) The official method, in which every stanza irrespective of its meter and the length of its foot is taken as one *śloka*. In the prose passages, a sentence or a period of indefinite length is counted as a unit, colophons at the end of chapters and *Uvāca* references being ignored.

(ii) The scribe's method, in which a group of 32 syllables is counted as one *śloka*, colophons, references and even *daṇḍas*, double *daṇḍas* and stanza numbers also being computed in this manner.

(3) The reciter's method in which everything included in an actual recitation is taken into consideration and then the scribe's method is applied. Belvalkar holds that the figures as given in the *Parvasaṅgraha* chapter of the *Mahābhārata* are arrived at by applying the official method.

In the opinion of Dr. D. D. Kosambi, the figures were reached by a mathematical method, which is the same as the reciter's method mentioned by Belvalkar. Kosambi's study of the *Bhīṣmaparvan* shows that the text of the *Critical Edition*, is nearest to the *Parvasaṅgraha* figure (5884)[2] and that including the *uvāca* insertions the *Gītā* has 743 slokas of 32 syllabes each, whereas the *Gītāmāna* stanza states the number to be 745.[3]

Dr. Sukthankar suggests that the following method might have been adopted by the original computers :

> First an average was obtained by counting carefully all letters in certain number of lines. This average was then multiplied by the number of lines in a page and the total number of complete pages. The number of *granthas*, of the last page, which was rarely fully written out, seems to have been computed separately, and

[1] *Annals of Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*. Poona, XXVII, pp. 303-9 (Later referred to as *Bhandarkar Annals*).

[2] *Journal of the American Orie ntal Society*, (JAOS) 66, pp. 110-17.

[3] JAOS, 71, pp. 21-2.

added to the previous total. The grand total of letters (*akśaras*) was then divided by 32 to give the number of *ślokas*" or "*granthas*", fractions being omitted.[1]

The following table showing the number of verses and chapters in every book of the *Mahābhārata* according to various printed editions will make it clear that the text of the epic is fluid to a considerable extent whatever method of computation we may apply.[2]

Parvan No.	Ganpat Krishnaji Edn.	Gopal Narayan Edn.	Kumbh konam Edn.	Critical Edition
I	8466	8619	10998	7187
II	2709	2712	4377	2390
III	11854	10494	14081	10306
IV	2327	2272	3575	1834
V	6618	6559	6752	6063
VI	5817	5969	5908	5406
VII	9593	9572	10127	8112
VIII	4987	4964	4986	3871
IX	3608	3618	3594	3293
X	810	803	815	772
XI	826	825	807	730
XII	13732	14938	15153	12866
XIII	7839	7639	10983	6536
XIV	2852	2766	4543	2862
XV	1085	1088	1098	1062
XVI	287	287	300	273
XVII	109	110	111	106
XVIII	307	320	337	194
Total	83826	83525	98545	73863

(iii) ITS HETEROGENEOUS CHARACTER

At some point in history, the *Mahābhārata* came to assume the position of a scripture and a law book and all sort of extraneous material, relevant and irrelevant was added to it. As Hermann Oldenberg has graphically put it,

> Besides the main story, there were veritable forests of small stories and besides, numberless and endless instructions on

[1] *Sukthankar Memorial*, p. 423.

[2] C. V. Vaidya, *Mahābhārata Upasaṁhāra*, p. 4.

theology, philosophy, natural sciences, law, politics, practical and theoretical knowledge of life. A poem full of deeply significant dreamings and surmisings, delicate poetry and school masterly platitudes, full of sparkling play of colour, of oppressive and mutually jostling masses of images, of showers of arrows of endless battles, clash after clash of death despising heroes, of over virtuous ideal men, of ravishing beautiful women, of terrible tempered asctics, adventurous fabulous beings, of fantastic miracles—full of empty flood of words and wide, free peeps into the order of the course of the world.[1]

Shri R. C. Dutt is even more unsympathetic,

...The heterogeneous nature of its contents does not add to the interest of the work..... If the religious works of Hooker and Jeremy Taylor, the Philosophy of Hobbes and Locke, the commentaries of Blackstone and the Ballads of Percy together with the tractarian writings of Newman, Keble and Pusey were all thrown into Blank verse and incorporated with the Paradise Lost, the reader would scarcely be much to blame if he failed to appreciate the delectable compound.[2]

Perhaps C. Rajagopalachari is more to the point when he says, "In those days, when there was no printing, interpolation in a recognised classic seemed to correspond to inclusion in the national library".[3] Keith puts this very point in his own manner. "The epic had been too essentially a living force in the life of India and it has paid the penalty in the constant adaptation and alteration, in expansion and expurgation".[4]

Material of different kinds was added to the epic nucleus e.g., (1) legendary matter from the bardic repertoire having but a casual connection or having no connection, with the epic heroes; (2) myths and legends of Brahmanic origin and didactic sections pertaining to Brahmanic philosophy, ethics and law, stressing the superiority of the Brahmaṇas; (3) genealogical and geographical matter and

[1] *Meaning of Mahābhārata*, Bombay (1937), p. 125.
[2] Romesh Chandra Dutt, *Mahābhārata Condensed into English Verse, Kitabistan, Allahabad* p. 184. (Later referred to as *Dutta's Condensed Mahābhārata*).
[3] *Rajaji's Mahābhārata*, preface, p. 8.
[4] *Indian Culture*, Vol VIII No 4, p. 767.

local myths; (4) Myths of Kṛṣṇa and later of Śiva; (5) fables, parables, fairy tales and moral stories; (6) ascetic poetry; and (7) prose pieces and Brahmanical legends and moral tales, entirely or partly in prose.[1]

(iv) Problem of Its Authorship

The origin of this work has become a matter of controversy. Scholars have assumed (with the exception of Dahlmann) that it is impossible for a single author to compose such a gigantic work single-handed, though in Marathi we have the prolific writer Dasopant (16th century A.D.) among whose writings the GITĀRAṆVA, a commentary on the Gītā alone runs into 125,000 verses. However, in the *Mahābhārāta* itself it is expressly mentioned that at least three poets had a hand in its composition. It was first composed by Vyāsa, the natural grandfather of the heroes and villains of the epic, in 24,000 verses working on the talk for three years.[2] The epic was then taught to five of his pupils who made their own recensions.[3] One of these five, Vaiśampāyana recited it on the occasion of the serpent sacrifice performed by King Janamejaya, the great grandson of the heroes in the presence of the original author who was the grandfather of the great-grand-father of the host.[4] Lomaharṣaṇa heard it and in his turn sang it in the 12-year sacrificial session of a sage Śaunaka in the Naimiṣa forest.[5]

So we have three levels of composition of the *Mahābhārata*. The original work of Vyāsa as taught to Vaiśampāyana and other pupils cannot now be traced. We have now the work in the form of a dialogue between Vaiśampāyana and Janamejaya in which hundreds of other dialogues have been inserted, this dialogue between Vaiśampāyana and Janamejaya, in its turn being reported to sage Śaunaka by the bard Sauti, adding on occasions conversations between themselves.

About the transmission of the *Mahābhārata* tradition, the text proper says that Vyāsa taught the work to his son Śuka in the first

[1] *History of Indian Literature,* Delhi I Teste A.D. Pusalkar, *Cultural Heritage* Calcutta, Vol II p. 61.

[2] I 56.32.

[3] I 57.vv. 74, 75.

[4] I 55.22.

[5] I 1.8-19.

instance and then to other deserving pupils. Nārada narrated the epic to the gods, Asita Devala to manes and Śuka to Gandharvas, Yakṣas, and demons.[1]

Some versions state that Vyāsa prepared another composition of 60,00,000 verses of which 30,00,000 verses came to be established among the gods, 15,00,000 among the manes, 14,00,000 among the demons and Yakṣas, and 100,000 among human beings,[2] Vaiśampāyana being the expounder in this world, whereas according to Bengali version, Vyāsa taught the poem to Śuka first and then to Sumantu, Jaimini, Paila and Vaiśampāyana.[2a] These pupils afterwords broadcast various versions of the Bhārata.[3] The heterogeneous material of the Epic and the express mention of three persons being responsible for giving the *Mahābhārata* its present shape make it clear that many hands had built this huge edifice of the epic through generations. Mention is also made of the composition of the *Mahābhārata* by Vyāsa in 60,00,000 verses out of which only 100,000 verses were allowed to the mortals, the remaining portion being unequally divided among gods, Gandharvas, Yakṣas etc.[4] This may perhaps suggest that hundreds of poets and poetasters had tried their hands freely on the epic story, but out of the immense product only one sixtieth part was at some stage put together to form our present epic and the remaining portion consigned to oblivion. If that is the case, it would be clear that the epic story as well as the hundreds of legends and other discourses and tracts forming parts of the great epic were in a sort of fluid condition and many traditions of the same were current in India. Other scholars also agree that the Great Epic is the creation of many hands over a long stretch of time. Only Dahlmann holds that it is a composition of one single author with a definite plan behind it, with a view to providing a vehicle of sacred lore and a manual of popular instructions at the same time.[5]

The *Critical Edition* of the *Mahābhārata*, however, has proved that large blocks of the text like the *Brahmā Ganeśa* complex, the *Kaṇika*

[1] I 1.64.

[2] I 29*N (except D14; D13 missing) $T1G_7$.

[2a] I 5 B_4.

[3] I 28* TG_7.

[4] I 29*N (except D14; D13 missing) $T1G_7$.

[5] *Meaning of Mahābhārata*, p. 12 p. 21.

Niti in BK I, the hymns to Durgā in BKS IV and VI, the detailed description of the incarnations of Viṣṇu in BK II and the full enunciation of the *Vaiṣṇavadharma* in BK XIV are later interpolations.[1] Dahlmann's theory, therefore, can no more be entertained. The difficulty in assuming single authorship for the *Mahābhārata*, has been graphically put forth by Winternitz.

> In truth, he who would believe... that our *Mahābhārata* in its present form, is the work of one single man, would be forced to the conclusion that this man was, *at one and the same time*, a great poet and a wretched scribbler, a sage and an idiot, a talented artist and a ridiculous pedant—apart from the fact that this marvellous person must have known and confessed the most antagonistic religious views and the most contradictory philosophical doctrines.[2]

(v) Its Date

That the *Mahābhārata* took centuries to take its present shape is beyond dispute and the following scheme of dates suggested by Hopkins[3] may still be relied upon.

BC 400 *Bhārata*, (Kuru) lays, perhaps combined into one, but with no evidence of the epic.

BC 400 to BC 200 : A *Mahābhārata* tale with Pāṇḍu heroes, lays and legends combined by the Puranic diaskeuasts, and Kṛṣṇa as a demigod (no evidence of didactic form or of Kṛṣṇa's divine supremacy).

BC 200 to AD 200 : Remaking of the epic with Kṛṣṇa as all-god, intrusion of masses and dialectic matter, addition of Puranic material old and new, and multiplication of exploits.

AD 200 to AD 400 : The last books added with the introduction of the first book, the swollen *Anuśāsana* separated from *Śānti* and recognized as a separate book.

AD 400 and thereafter : Occasional amplifications.

Dr. Sukthankar, however, rejects the aforesaid scheme saying, "Indeed there is not one figure or one statement in the

[1] ibid, p. 22.

[2] *History of Indian Literature*, Delhi, Vol I, pp. 460-1.

[3] *The Great Epic of India*, pp. 397-8.

above table which can be verified or which can lay claims to objective validity".[1] Though all dates given in Indian literary history are "pins set up to be bowled down again" (as Whitney puts it) the upper and lower limits for the *Mahābhārata* as suggested by Hopkins can be accepted.

The *Mahābhārata* has been referred to as an authoritative book of one hundred thousand verses in an inscription of the fifth century AD[2] and it frequently refers to Yavanas, *i.e.*, the Greeks (Ionions) which means that the work in *its present form* cannot be placed before the 4th century BC. Therefore the only safe statement would be that the *Mahābhārata* in its present form must be placed between 400 BC and 400 AD.[3]

(vi) The Critical Edition

The *Mahābhārata* was printed for the first time in 1834-39 at Calcutta by Asiatic Society of Bengal and subsequently in 1863 and 1913 by Ganapat Krishnaji and Gopal Narayan respectively at Bombay and in 1855-60 at Madras in Telugu characters. These editions were not based on any critical principles. Manuscripts that could be available to the editors were used indiscriminately.

Even with such faulty editions, the scholars could deduce that the *Mahābhārata* has come down to us in two distinct recensions, Southern and Northern. At the appearance of Protap Chandra Roy's edition of the *Mahābhārata* (1883-96) a scholar from Mayaveram, Shri Shreenivasa Sastrial, complained that, "Roy's edition was 'sadly defective in the text' and that this defect is detrimental to the religious interests as many portions supporting the *Advaita* and Vāsista-advaita (Sic) doctrines, but unfavourable to the Śakti worshippers of the North, have been omitted". Protap Chandra Roy admitted that there can be no edition of the *Mahābhārata* howsoever carefully edited it might be that would please scholars of every part of India. "I know of no method except that of taking that only as undoubtedly genuine which occurs in all the manuscripts of the East, the North, the West and the South".[4]

[1] *Sukthankar Memorial*, op. cit. p. 9.

[2] *History of Indian Literature*, I P. 407.

[3] A Gupta inscription of Cedi Somvat 197 i.e. 289 A.D. mentions the *Mahābhārata* of a hundred thousand verses—Inscriptionum Indicarum. Vol. III, p. 13.

[4] *Sukthankar Memorial*, Vol I, p. 43.

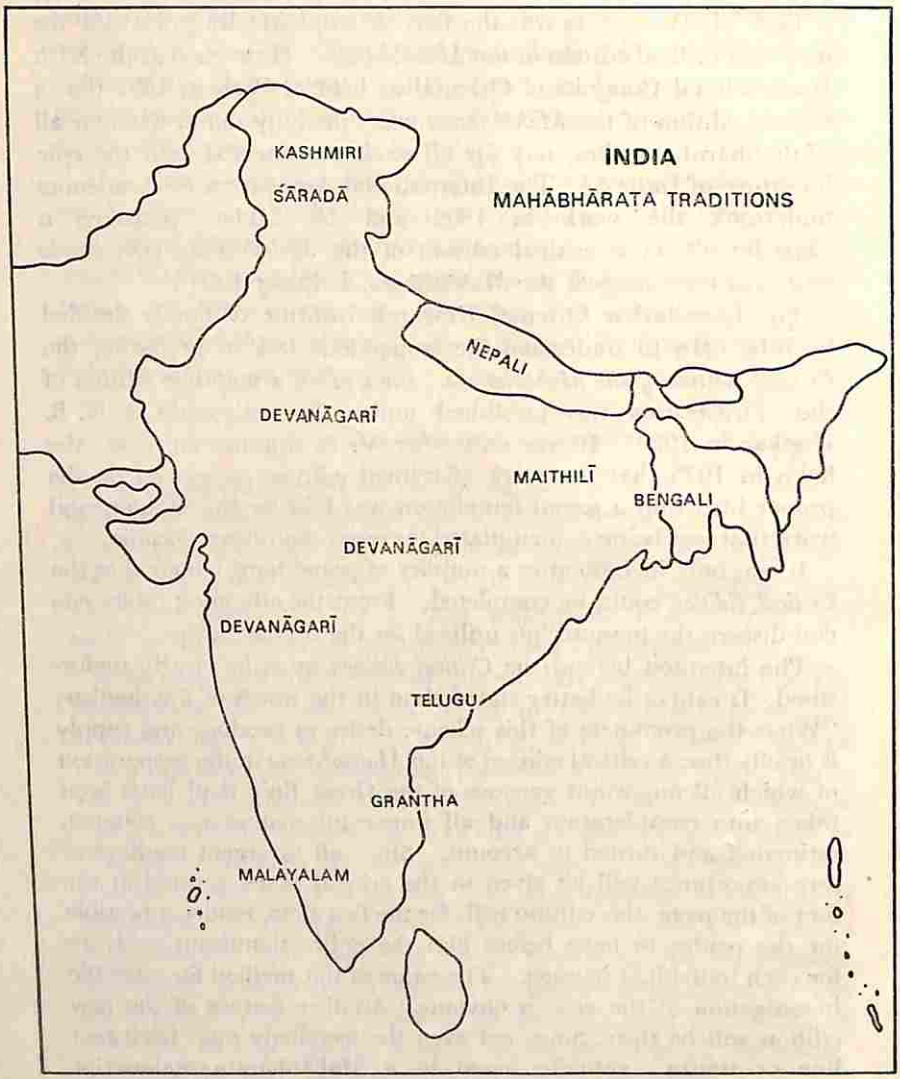
Prof. M. Winternitz was the first to emphatically point out the need of a critical edition of the *Mahābhārata*. He argued at the XIth International Congress of Orientalists held at Paris in 1897 that a critical edition of the *Mahābhārata* was "the only sound basis for all Mahābhārata studies, nay for all studies connected with the epic literature of India".[1] The International Association of Academics undertook the work in 1904 and H. Lüders prepared a "Specimen" of a critical edition of the *Mahābhārata* (*Druckprobe einer Kritischen Ausgabe des Mahābhārata*, Leipzsig 1908).

The Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute of Poona decided in July 1918 to undertake the stupendous task of preparing the *Critical Edition of the Mahābhārata*. First of all a tentative edition of the *Virāṭaparvan* was published under the editorship of N. B. Utgikar in 1923. It was only after V. S. Sukthankar took the helm in 1925 that the work of critical edition progressed on the proper lines and a sound foundation was laid for the monumental work that was being contemplated for more than three decades.

It was only in 1966 after a number of years' hard labour that the *Critical Edition* could be completed. From the adjoining tables one can discern the manuscripts utilized for the *Critical Edition*.

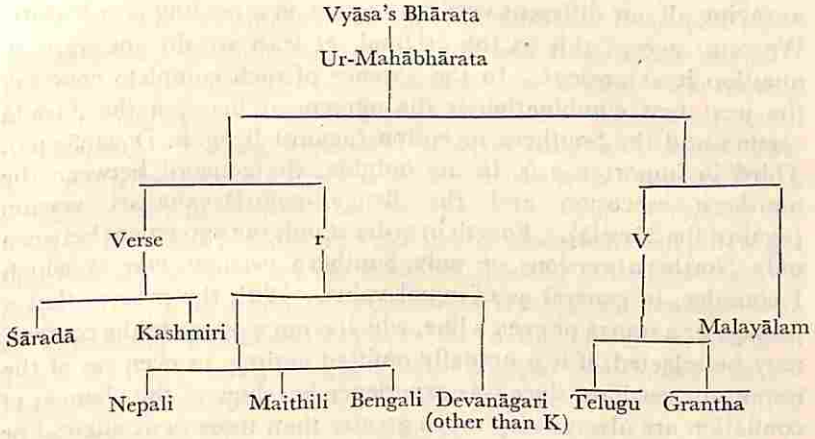
The intention behind the *Critical Edition* must be clearly understood. It cannot be better stated than in the words of Sukthankar, "What the promoters of this scheme desire to produce and supply is briefly this: a critical edition of the *Mahābhārata* in the preparation of which all important versions of the Great Epic shall have been taken into consideration and all important manuscripts collated, estimated and turned to account. Since all divergent readings of any importance will be given in the critical notes, printed at the foot of the page, this edition will, for the first time, render it possible for the reader to have before him the entire significant evidence for each individual passage. The value of this method for scientific investigation of the epic is obvious. Another feature of the new edition will be this: Since not even the seemingly most irrelevant line or stanza, actually found in a Mahābhārata manuscript collated for the edition, is on any account omitted, this edition of the Mahābhārata will be, in a sense, more complete than any previous edition. It will be a veritable thesaurus of the Mahābhārata tradition".[1]

[1] *Sukthankar Memorial*, Vol I, p. 13.


INDIA
MAHĀBHĀRATA TRADITIONS
KASHMIRI
ŚĀRADĀ
NEPALI
DEVANĀGARĪ
MAITHILĪ
BENGALI
DEVANĀGARĪ
DEVANĀGARĪ
TELUGU
GRANTHA
MALAYALAM

A closer study of various manuscripts has proved that besides the two versions, the *Mahābhārata* has been handed down in numerous versions, these latter roughly corresponding with the different scripts in which various provincial languages of India are written.[1] These versions can be grouped together to form the two main recensions. Dr. Sukthankar has established the relationship among the various recensions and versions of the *Ādiparvan* in the following manner.[2]

PEDIGREE OF ĀDIPARVAN VERSIONS



The aforesaid table may safely be applied to the whole *Mahābhārata*. Franklin Edgerton, however, makes a finer division of the stream of *Mahābhārata* tradition by assuming a separate group for Śāradā and Kāśmīri versions.[3]

The editors' ambition has been to discover the archetype which stands at the basis of the different recensions and branches of tradition.[4] The editors have never claimed to have tried to reconstruct the *Ur-Mahābhārata* or the *Ur-Bhārata* or to produce the exact replica of the poem as recited by Vaiśamnpāyana before Janamejaya. "It only claims to be the most ancient one (i.e. text) according to the direct line of transmission, purer than the others insofar as it is free from the obvious errors of copying and spurious

[1] Op. cit, Vol I, p. 41.
[2] Vide the adjoined map.
[3] *Mahābhārata*, BORI, Vol.2, p. XL.
[4] *Bhandarkar Annals* XXHIX, p. 303.

additions".[1] It is but a modest attempt to present *a version of the epic as old as the extant manuscript material will permit us to reach* with some semblance of confidence.[2]

The principles of textual criticism which Sukthankar evolved for the *Mahābhārata* have been universally acclaimed as being the most perfect ones. They had best been stated here in brief in the words of the author:

"The highest documental probability we can demand and expect is when all manuscripts of our critical apparatus—which is the same as saying all our different versions—agree on a reading or a feature. We must accept this as the original, at least we do not want to question it at present. In the absence of such complete concord, the next best combination is the agreement between the Śāradā version and the Southern recension (against Bengali, Devanāgarī). Third in importance is, in my opinion, the concord between the Southern recension and the Bengali-cum-Devanāgarī version (against the Śāradā). Fourth in order stands the agreement between only Northern versions or only Southern versions *inter se* which I consider, in general as of equal value. With the proviso that a passage or a stanza or even a line, which is not *necessary* to the context, may be rejected, if it is actually omitted entirely in even *one* of the important versions, since—as experience has shown—the chances of conflation are always very much greater than those of accidental or intentional omission".

(vii) Scope, Methodology and Limitations of the Present Study

It must have been clear from the foregoing discussion that it will be futile to hunt for the original *Mahābhārata*, the autograph copy of the great Epic, which perhaps never existed. The *Mahābhārata* legend has been handled by a number of poets, and the number of contributors to the corpus has been a legion. The number of wavy lines used by the editors to denote doubtful passages—doubtful even after meticulous application of the principles of textual criticism—indicate that the Text of the *Mahābhārata* has been fluid to a large extent. Undoubtedly the importance of the *Mahābhārata*

[1] *Sukthankar Memorial* Vol.1, p. 129.

[2] Op. cit, p. 159.

and its influence on the culture of India and the neighbouring countries is admitted by every body, but the *Mahābhārata* in this context has to be understood in the sense of the whole complex, the whole tradition going under that name with all the additions made from time to time.

The *Mahābhārata* redactors seem to be very fond of the metaphor of a river especially to describe the battlefield and sometimes also to convey some abstract ideas. I may also be allowed to indulge in the same metaphor to make clear what I propose to do in this study of the Transmission of the *Mahābhārata* Tradition. The *Mahābhārata* is like the mighty Gangā having its source in the lofty Himālaya—a great poet's imagination : its crystal clear course being joined by the rivers and streams of other legends, episodes, philosophical thinking, etc., until incorporating and assimilating all these tributaries the original serene stream transforms itself into a mighty torrent flowing through plains of Time, fertilizing the fields of literatures in Sanskrit, Prakrit, and modern Indian languages and helping to carry on the trade of thought with exchange of ideas in the whole of India and even outside keeping at the same time its sanctifying character, it passes on to the Ocean of Eternity. The task, that I have set myself, is to analyze and examine to the extent that is possible the waters the tributaries have brought to the holy river.

For this study the *Critical Edition* has been utilized as fully as possible as it is the only available source prepared on scientific principles. It gives the rejected passages as footnotes or appendices, and thus makes it possible to make a comparative study of the different *Mahābhārata* Traditions. Taking the constituted Text as the basis, deviations from and additions to the same have been noted and classified. The contention of the first general editor that the constituted Text may be taken as representing the version of the epic as old as the earliest extant manuscript material permitted him to reach—and that it may be taken as the 10th century AD—may be accepted on the whole. A close study of these deviations and additions will be helpful in identifying the special characteristics of cultural trends in various parts of India.

Though a number of studies of the culture and philosophy of the *Mahābhārata* are available, they can no more be looked upon as authoritative, since they are based on the eclectic editions of the Epic. Studies based on the constituted Text of the *Critical Edition*

have not been attempted so far. In the absence of such studies, it has not been possible for the present author to pin-point the deviations. A study of these deviations would have certainly enabled one to identify contributions of various cultural regions of India to the great Epic and through it to the Indian culture as a whole.

Even then a study of additional passages repeating and emphasizing a particular feature in the *Mahābhārata* is not without its own significance. It will highlight the aspects of culture especially valued by that particular region.

A comparative review of the material collected here with the literature contemporary to the stream of the *Mahābhārata* between 400 BC to AD 400, like the *Kalpasūtras*, the *Smṛtis*, the *Kautiliya Artha Śāstra*, the *Rāmāyaṇa* of Valmiki, the *Aṣṭādhyani*, the *Mahābhaṣya*, etc., would have been interesting and instructive, but it was not possible to do justice to the task within the time limit set for the present work.

This monograph does not pretend to present what the *Mahābhārata*, i.e., the constituted Text says about the various topics listed in the table of contents but only to record the deviations and additions as found in the manuscripts representing the two main recensions and their different versions.

All the MSS utilized for the *Critical Edition* were not dated. The earliest dated manuscripts do not go beyond the 16th century AD. For aught we know, some of the undated manuscripts may be of an earlier period. Even among the dated manuscripts it is possible that later manuscripts are copies of earlier ones. Consequently the dates of the manuscripts may not be of much significance. We have to satisfy ourselves with noting the particular features peculiar to a particular region without being able to draw any conclusions from the relative period of the dated manuscripts.

The traditions also are sometimes hopelessly intermixed. The cultural regions roughly correspond to scriptal zones but on the borders of these regions, there are biscriptal zones, where the scribes are equally at home with two scripts. There is, again, the Devanāgarī script which was universally used for writing Sanskrit in addition to the provincial script. Places of pilgrimage like Vārāṇasī, Rameshwar, Ujjain where scholars from every province of India used to gather (and do so still) must have played an important role together with the biscriptal zones and the Devanāgarī script in

intermingling cultural trends in general and those of the *Mahābhārata* in particular.

It is not unusual to find certain passages which are common among the versions belonging to remote parts of India such as Kashmir, Bengal, Andhra, Tamilnadu, etc. In such cases it is not safe to draw conclusions because one is not sure which is the donor and which the recipient. I have based my conclusions only on passages which are peculiar to a particular tradition as a whole. If they are found in a few passages of other traditions, that fact has been ignored.

In this monograph from Chapter II onwards, wherever the words *Mahābhārata* the Epic, and the Text are used, they mean the Constituted Text in the *Critical Edition*.

No. of MSS of various versions utilized for the Critical Edition

Later referred to as	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	R	XII	M	XIII	XIV	XV	XVI	XVII	XVIII
Southern Recension	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	1	1	1		1	1		—	—
Kashmiri version	7	4	4	2	5	5	5	4	5	6	6	5	5	5		5	5	5	5	5
Northern version	3	1								1	1									
Bengali version	6	6	4	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	4	6	6	5	5	5	6	6	6	6
Maithili version	1	1						1				1	1	1	1					
Devanagari composite version	14	6	6	12	10	8	8	8	11		9	8	8	8	10	6	9	9	9	9
Da	2					2		1		8		2	2	2	1				—	
Chaturbhuja's Devanāgari version			2				1									1			—	
Nilkantha's Devanāgari version	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	3	1	2	2	2	2
Ratnagarbha's Devanāgari version	4				2				2		1	—	—	2			1		—	
Sarvajana Narayana's Devanāgari version					2				2		1						1		—	—
Arjunamisra's Commentary											1									
Devabodha's commentary																				
Vimalbodha's commentary															2					
Nilkantha's commentary									1						1		1	1	1	1
Cu									1						1		1	1	1	1
Vadiraja's commentary	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1						1					
Telugu version	3	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	4	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	4	4	4	4
C	7	6	4	3	5	4	5	3	3	3	3	4	3	4	4	3	5	5	5	5
Malayalam version	8	2	2	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5

Oldest date Mss of various

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX
S	16th or Cent.	16 or 17th cent	16th or 17th AD	708 AD (probable)	—	1939 AD	1709 AD	1708 AD	
K	1519 AD	:1822 AD	1722 AD	1772 AD	1566A AD	1886 AD	1641 AD	1772 AD	1772 AD
N	1511 AD								
B	1740 AD	1740 AD	1741 AD		1772 AD	1749 AD	1709 AD	1719 AD	1712 AD
V	1528 AD	AD						1444 AD	
D	1598 AD	1570 AD	1599A AD	1437 AD	1600 AD	1640 AD	1684 AD	1458 AD	1592 AD
Da	1620 AD					1697 AD			
Dc		1765 AD	1765(?) AD						
Dn	1808 AD	1783 AD	1783 AD		1744 AD		1790 AD	1730 AD	
Dr.	1701 AD								
Ds									
Ca									
Cd									
Cb									
Vadiraja's Commentary									
Cu									
T			—					—	1872 AD
Grantha version	1842	:1879 AD	— AD					—	
M		1838 AD	—	1831 AD	1853 AD	1853 AD	1841 AD	1742 AD	1838 AD

Versions utilized for the Critical Edition

X	XI	XII R	XII A	XII M	XIII	XIV	XV	XVI	XVII	XVIII
1709 AD							—	—	—	
1679 AD		1771 AD	1771 AD	1771 AD		1679 AD	1649 AD	1694 AD	1694 AD	169 AD
1511 AD	1511 AD									
—	—	1677 AD	1677 AD	1677 AD	1520 AD	1738 AD		17th Cent AD	1719 AD	1719 AD
		1516 AD	1516 AD	1516 AD	—					
1612 AD		1610 AD	1610 AD	1610 AD	1686 AD	1738 AD	1690 AD	1485 AD	1611 AD	1612 AD
							1612 AD			
					1660 AD					
1758 AD		1782 AD	1769 AD	1758 AD						
					1651 AD					
					1802 AD					
					1660 :			1675 AD	1675 AD	1675 AD
	—									
	—									
1839 AD		1746 AD	1746 AD	1746 AD	1800 AD	1841 AD				

CHAPTER TWO

THE NUCLEUS

THE main story of the *Mahābhārata* serving as a string holding the numberless legends, episodes, discussions and dialectic portions together, the story of conflict between the cousins, how the ones of blameless deeds came to be alienated and how that great terrible war involving carnage of innumerable souls took place,[1] is too well-known to need any summary here. The two main recensions and various versions do not introduce any radical change in the plot of the Epic. Only a few details are added here and there, some of which may be characteristic of the land of their origin.

The additions will be noted in the following pages in two groups, the first one consisting of passages that are concerned with the plot and the second one of passages that have a bearing on characterization.

I

THE PLOT

BOOK I (ĀDIPARVAN)

Bhīṣma proclaims that he would give up (right to) kingship and sexual pleasure henceforth so that the fisherman might not have any misgivings against offering his foster daughter to Śantanu in marriage.[2] Does it mean that Bhīṣma was already married? Cf I 94.88. in which he says, "From today onwards I shall observe *Brahmacharya*".

[1] I 54.19.

[2] I. 988* D4 (marg. Secanda Manu).

Kings assembled for the *svayaṁvara* of the Kaśī princesses make fun of Bhīṣma because he is old and a confirmed bachelor. The princesses themselves are scared. So Bhīṣma gets furious and carries away the princesses by force.[1] In the Text we find Bhīṣma carrying away the girls without any provocation. He is there, perhaps, resorting to the *Rākṣasa* form of marriage that was allowed for the Kṣatriyas.

Ambā, being repudiated by Bhīṣma, and Sālya both, practises hard penance. God Kumāra appears before her and gives her a garland, prophesying that the bearer of it will cause Bhīṣma's death. Ambā goes to the palace of Yajñasena, the king of the Pāñcālas, and appeals to him against Bhīṣma. Yajñasena is too afraid of the Kuru warrior to help Ambā and expresses his helplessness. Ambā then leaves the garland at the door of Yajñasena. Later on a daughter of his places it round her head. Drupada alias Yajñasena, gets frightened at seeing the garland around her head and abandons her. She goes to a Brahmin at Gaṅgādvāra and according to his advice sees two Gandharvas, one of whom exchanges sex with her and she after becoming a man obtains proficiency in the arts of warfare and returns to her father.[2]

In the Text Bhīṣma allows Ambā to go as soon as she discloses her heart's desire,[3] and narrates her story further in the *Udyogaparvan* Ch 170 to Ch 197, how she is introduced to Paraśurāma by her maternal grandfather, how Paraśurāma tries to persuade Bhīṣma to accept her hand and fails, the battle between the two ensues and Paraśurāma's discomfiture thus increases; Ambā's penance to propitiate Śiva and subsequent self-immolation; then the birth of Drupada's daughter through the grace of Śiva, her being brought up as a son and married to Daśārha princess; and subsequently exchange of her sex with the Yakṣa Sthūṇa. This transformed daughter of Drupada, who came to be called Śikhandin, was the reincarnation of Ambā, destined to kill Bhīṣma through the boon of Śiva.

The Epic speaks of only one wife of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the father of Kauravas: but the Southern version tells us that he had a hundred and eleven wives which makes hundred Kauravas quite a likely

[1] I. 998* N2 V_1D_4 (marg) S.

[2] I 55 K4 (Supplementary following) D4 (Supplementary following) Southern Recension.

[3] I 96.47-51.

thing. It says that Gāndhārī's father gave to Dhṛtarāṣṭra ten daughters in marriage in addition to Gāndhārī and Bhīṣma on his part secured one hundred more princesses for Dhṛtarāṣṭra through valour (*Dhanuṣkṛita*).[1]

Kuntī was so resplendent and beautiful that no king dared to ask for her hand. So Kuntibhoja, her father, had to hold a *Svayaṁvara* in which Kuntī selected Pāṇḍu. The Epic mentions no *Svayaṁvara*.

Sages in the Himalaya name the gods through whom Pāṇḍu is to get his sons,[2] whereas in the Text it is Pāṇḍu who particularly directs Kuntī to invoke the gods concerned. Mādrī does so as she desires.

For a passage of 18 verses (I 119, 24-43), Kashmiri version, Nepali, Bengali, and Devanagari composite versions insert two passages (I 71† 72†) together of 128 lines, and Telugu and Grantha versions a passage (I 73†) of 134 lines to describe the poison episode. Whereas in the Constituted Text in the *Critical Edition* Duryodhana's villainy of tying Bhīma when asleep and throwing him into water and of feeding him poisoned food is briefly described as two separate incidents, in the two versions they are combined into one. In the two versions, Vāsuki, the serpent king begins to admire Bhīma in the netherworld and gives him some invigorating drink of which Bhīma drinks off eight pondfuls.

The Text does not mention Vāsuki. Poisonous serpents are introduced on another occasion to bite Bhīma, but they are unable to penetrate his tough skin. These serpents are replaced by the mythical serpent: King Vāsuki in the passages concerned.

Both the passages from Southern and Northern versions enhance Duryodhana's villainy by making him put morsels of poisoned food into Bhīma's mouth with pretended affection, the Southern passage adds one more touch to Duryodhana's villainy and says that he had taken care to dig spears into that part of the riverbed where Bhīma was to be hurled, only through good luck Bhīma fell on a spot where there were no spears.

Meanwhile Kuntī begins to worry about Bhīma's safety. She sends for Vidura and confides her fears to him, who in his turn assures her that everything will be all right. Bhīma returns

[1] I 1129 *K1-4 Nepali, Bengali, and Devanāgari composite versions.
[2] I 1273*SD4 marg. Secundᵃ Manu (by other hand).

after having spent eight days in sleep. At the advice of Vidura, the Pāṇḍavas decide to keep the whole incident confidential.[1]

Droṇa narrates that other boys, sons of the rich, used to make fun of Aśvatthāman by offering him flour mixed with water as milk and that the poor boy used to dance with delight under the impression that he had drank milk.[2] It was this sad sight that sent Droṇa to Drupada and made him remind the latter of their friendship in childhood. The Text does not mention the milk incident. Droṇa simply goes to Drupada after obtaining missiles from Paraśurāma.[3]

Droṇa used to give gourds to his pupils for fetching water and an earthen pot to Aśvatthāman so that he could come earlier than the others and Droṇa could teach him higher secrets of archery. Arjuna, however, used to fill his gourd with the *Varuṇa* missile quickly and come to the preceptor along with Aśvatthāman, so that he became equally proficient with Aśvatthāman.[4]

Droṇa once made an earthen doll and threw it into the Ganges. Then blindfolding his pupils, he asked them to pierce it with their arrows. Only Arjuna could pierce it with ten flights of arrows, each flight consisting of five arrows. Droṇa then promised to teach him the missile *Brahmaśiras*.[5]

In a passage of 194 lines the miraculous births of Dhṛṣṭdyumna and Draupadī as well as of Drupada himself are described. Chafing under the defeat at the hand of Droṇa's pupils, Drupada approaches the sage Yāja and requests him to perform a sacrifice through which a son will be born, who will prove to be the death of Droṇa. The sacrifice is performed and while the offerings were being made in the sacrificial fire the resplendent pair comes out. This miracle is described in the Text also but in the passage under study it is dwelt upon in more detail.

Drupada's father was practising hard penance in order to get offspring when he saw the nymph Menakā at the sight of whom

[1] 1 71† Kashmiri version, Nepali, Bengali, and Devanagari composite versions, 32 lines I 72† Kashmiri version, Nepali, Bengali, and Devanagari Composite versions, 96 lines.
I 73† Telugu and Grantha versions, 134 lines.

[2] I 75† All manuscripts excepts 1 Ko-3.

[3] I 121.23.

[4] I 76† Kashmiri version, Nepali, Bengali, and Devanagari composite versions and Telugu version Grantha 1.2.4.5.

[5] I 77† Grantha1.2.4.5. Telugu 2. 29 lines.

the king was perturbed and his semen fell on the ground. Feeling ashamed of himself, he trampled on it, but a son came out of the same who was called Drupada.[1] The Text speaks nothing about Drupada's birth.

Appendix passages Nos I 82[2] (36 lines) I 83[3] (65 lines) describe Duryodhana's jealousy and his attempts to persuade Dhṛtarāṣṭra to banish Pāṇḍavas.

Bhīma is for a bold policy of staying with the Kauravas in Hastināpura setting foot on their throats after discovering that the Palace at Vāraṇāvata is only a house of wax built especially for burning the Pāṇḍavas.[4]

Vidura sends a messenger with a boat to take the Pāṇḍavas out of danger from Vāraṇāvata.[5] Telugu 2 Grāntha versions and that on the northern bank of the Ganges a Niṣāda chief receives the Pāṇḍavas. He is also employed by Vidura.[6]

The Kirāta woman, who was burnt in the house of wax was in the service of Purocana as his spy.[7]

Karṇa tries to shoot an arrow at the mark in Draupadī's *svayaṁvara,* but Draupadī objects saying that she would not marry a '*sūta*'. Then Karṇa smiling angrily looks at the sun and places the bow on one side.[8] This is supposed to have motivated Karṇa's animosity towards Draupadī, for it is he who suggests in the *Sabhāparvan* that Draupadī's garment should be removed.[9] However I 1830* Telugu 1 Grantha 1 Malayali 3.6-8 and I 1834* Telugu 2 Grantha 3-6 also, I 1824* Kashmiri 3.4 Nepali & Maithili Bengali and Devanāgari Composite I 1847* K4 Nepali & Maithili I Bengali and Devanāgari Composite versions state that Karṇa tries to win the wager but is unsuccessful along with other kings. According to the constituted Text, Karṇa does not attempt at all to win the bride, perhaps out of respect for Duryodhana.

[1] I 79† Kashmiri Version 4 Devanāgari Composite version 4.5. (all supplementary Secunda Manu) Southern Recension.

[2] Southern Recension (except Grantha 3.6) Devanāgari 4.

[3] —Telugu 2 Grantha 2.4.5.

[4] I 84† Telugu, Grantha 1.2.4.

[5] I 85† Kashmiri 4 Nepali and Maithili; 1, Bengali Devanāgari, and Malayali, Telugu and Grantha.

[6] ibid.

[7] I 1474* Southern Recension.

[8] I 1827* Kashmiri 4 Nepali 2 Nīlkantha's Devanāgari version, Devanāgari composite version 2-4.5.

[9] II 61.38.

Again, Drupada holds the *svayaṁvara* of Draupadī expressly for the purpose of finding out Arjuna whom he desired Draupadī to marry.[1] No such intention is found in the Text.

The southerners appear to be feeling very much concerned about the polyandrous marriage of Draupadī and they have tried to explain the reason or reasons behind the apparently immoral behaviour on the part of the heroes and the heroine of the epic.

In the constituted Text also flimsy grounds, like the words Kuntī unwittingly said about enjoying the earning equally are advanced, but it appears they were not enough for the finer moral susceptibilities of the southern redactors. So they introduce the following additional grounds.

1. Vyāsa explains to Drupada that Yāja and Upayāja, the officiating priests at the sacrifice from which Draupadī was born, had themselves ordained that she would have five husbands.[2]

2. Vyāsa further relates: In her former birth Draupadī was Nāḷāyani, wife of the old and leprous Maudgalya, whom she served devotedly. One day, she found the thumb of Maudgalya in the food she was eating but quietly taking it out, she finished her meal. Maudgalya was pleased and revealed that his appearance was deceptive and that he had only been testing her. He asked how he should treat her and Nāḷāyani requested him to satisfy her passion dividing himself in five ways and assume his former unified self once again. Accordingly the sage enjoyed the company of his wife in various ways and various worlds.

Maudgalya was satiated with enjoyment after some years but not so Nāḷāyaṇī, called Indrasenā. Maudgalya started practising austerities but Indrasenā once again approached him and in very frank words asked for more satisfaction of her passions. Maudgalya then getting angry for the uninhibited manner in which Indrasenā had expressed her desire said that she would be born as a daughter of Drupada and would have five renowned husbands.

Cursed in this way, poor Nāḷāyaṇī went to the forest and practised hard penance. Śiva gave her the boon that she would be born in the human world that she would have five husbands, and also that she would serve a great cause of the gods. On her protesting that she wanted only one husband, Śiva said that since she said five times

[1] I 94† Devanāgari composite 4 (marg. Secunda Manu) 95† Southern Recension.

[2] I 100† SD4 (Supplementary folio Secunda Manu). Kashmiri 4 L 3.

'Give me a husband' (though the passage under consideration does not say so) she would have five husbands. On Nāḷāyaṇī pointing out again that a woman should not have more than one husband and that one who has relations with five men becomes a harlot, the god said that women were free formerly and that they are purified after menstruation. So Nāḷāyaṇī would not incur any sin. Nāḷāyaṇī had to agree but she asked for a special boon that at every union she would have her maidenhood intact and that her passions would be fully satisfied. Then Śiva asked her to go to the Gaṅgā and bring Indra to him from there.[1]

This in a way connects the story with the legend of five Indras narrated in the Text[2] where Draupadī is said to be the Glory of Heaven and the Pāṇḍavas the incarnations of four past Indras excepting Arjuna who is the son of the ruling Indra. It is said in the additional passage concerned that Nāḷāyaṇī is identical with the Glory of Heaven.

3. Indra incurred the sin of murdering a Brahmin by killing Vṛtra. His different qualities went to Yama, Vāyu, Asvinā, and some qualities like fame, prosperity, intellect, etc., took shelter in the Goddess of Speech. Because of the boon given by former Indra(s) and the command of Śiva, Pāṇḍavas are Dharma, etc., and qualities like fame have taken the form of Draupadī. So the Pāṇḍavas were Indra himself and Draupadī was Paulomī, the wife of Indra.

4. Arjuna is Viṣṇu himself and the other four Pāṇḍavas are his four arms, and Draupadī is Lakṣmī.

5. The five faces of Śiva like Sadyojāta, etc., are the Pāṇḍavas and Draupadī is Pārvatī.

6. Śiva himself in the Pañcāyatana form has incarnated himself as the Pāṇḍavas and what Draupadī is, is not stated.

7. The Pāṇḍavas might be the five fires and Draupadī Svāhā.

All these explanations have been given in one single passage![3]

V. Iyer in his book *Notes of a Study of the Preliminary Chapters of the Mahābhārata* thoroughly examines the various anecdotes that are found in the constituted Text and additional passages.[4]

[1] I 100† Southern Recension, Devanāgari composite (suppl. Folio Secunda Manu) Kashmiri 4.

[2] I 189.

[3] I 102† Telugu 3 Grantha 2-4.6.

[4] pp. 367-415.

That so many explanations were thought necessary for justifying the polyandrous marriage of the heroine of the epic, in itself shows that the moralist redactors were not themselves convinced in spite of these spacious arguments.

After the *svayaṁvara* of Draupadī, Śakuni advises Duryodhana to kill the Pāṇḍavas before they are known to their relatives like Kṛṣṇa and Śiśupāla. Saumadatti, however, points out the difficulties in pursuing this course. But Karṇa advocates war. Consequently, the Kaurava army swoops down upon the city of Drupada. The attack is countered by Drupada, his sons and Pāṇḍavas. In the battle Drupada loses two of his sons, Sumitra and Priyadarśana at the hands of Jayadratha and Karṇa, whose sons are killed by Arjuna in his turn. In the end, the Kaurava army is defeated and turned back. A message is sent to Kṛṣṇa in Dvārakā. Kṛṣṇa comes to see Pāṇḍavas with presents.[1]

Arjuna's kidnapping of Subhadrā is a romantic chapter in the life of that popular hero. In the Constituted Text the story is told in 160 verses in a straightforward manner. Arjuna in exile, after the birth of Babhruvāhana goes to Dvārakā. His cousin Kṛṣṇa meets him at Prabhāsa and takes him to Dvārakā where he stays for some days in great honour. After some days, Arjuna happens to see Subhadrā, a sister of Kṛṣṇa, on the mountains Raivataka on a festive occasion. He is fascinated by her and after some joking Kṛṣṇa advises him to carry her away forcibly. There is no trace of mutual love. On the contrary Kṛṣṇa expresses uncertainty about what Subhadrā will do at a *Svayaṁvara*. Arjuna follows his friend's advice. There is a great commotion in Dvārakā. The Yādava warriors meet and decide to attack Arjuna forthwith, but Kṛṣṇa points out that Arjuna is a fit match for Subhadrā, that he has in fact done honour to the Yādavas by kidnapping Subhadrā in the right Kṣatriya way and that he is invincible even for gods. Yādavas see the point and Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and other Yādava chieftains go to Hastināpura with rich presents for the bride and the bridegroom.[2]

In the Southern version, however, the incident is given both a romantic and a traditional colour in 462 lines.

[1] I 103† Kashmiri 4 Devanāgari composite (both on supplementary folio Secunda Manu) Southern Recension.

[2] I 210-214.

Gada, a cousin of Arjuna, had already told him about the charming Subhadrā, so he was already dreaming about her when he reached Dvārakā. He disguised himself as a *Parivrājaka* and mentally prayed to Kṛṣṇa for help. He met Baladeva and other Yādava leaders accidentally, who did not recognize him and taking him for a genuine mendicant invited him to Dvārakā and assigned him to the care of Subhadrā in spite of Kṛṣṇa's warning.

Arjuna found that he was already a popular figure in Dvārakā and that his name was almost a household word. He was being set as an ideal before young Yādava boys. Subhadrā had already heard so much of him that she was head over ears in love with him. Arjuna once revealed his identity to Subhadrā and she was so much love-sick that Devakī told Vasudeva about it and disclosed who the *Parivrājaka* was. Kṛṣṇa and a host of other Yādavas were admitted to the secret. However, for some unknown reason Balarāma and Uddhava were kept in the dark.

A festival of thirtyfour days in honour of Śiva was to be celebrated on the mountain Raivataka, but the "sage" had to take a twelve day vow during which he had not to leave Dvārakā. Naturally Subhadrā was left behind to take care of him. Arjuna suggested the Gāndharva form of marriage to Subhadrā so that after the vow during the most auspicious occasion they should get married. But Subhadrā was not easily persuaded to that rash course of action.

Just then Indra and Śacī accompanied by Nārada, Vasiṣtha, Arundhatī and other sages came to the spot, and so also Vasudeva, Devakī, Kṛṣṇa, and other Yādavas, leaving poor Balarāma asleep. Relatives on both the sides being present, the marriage was performed in the proper manner. Before taking leave of the newly married couple, Kṛṣṇa told Arjuna to take his chariot and go away, after staying in Dvārakā for 22 days more.

On that day, Subhadrā acted as the charioteer and being congratulated by her friends on getting an excellent husband drove the chariot speedily. Yādavas attacked Arjuna but he easily defeated them.[1]

According to another version, Arjuna at the request of Subhadrā spared her relatives.[2]

[1] I 113† Devanāgari composite 4 (marg Secunda Manu) Southern 37 lines.
I 114† Devanāgari composite 4 (marg Secunda Manu) Southern 462 lines.

[2] I 115† K4 (marg Secunda Manu) D4 (suppl. folio Secunda Manu) 63 lines.

Book II (Sabhāparvan)

In the Constituted Text when Jarāsandha is exhausted in his duel with Bhīma, Kṛṣṇa tells Bhīma in a clever manner that an enemy when too much exhausted should not be much harassed so he should not torture Jarāsandha but fight with him with his arms. Bhīma takes the hint.[1] Later on Kṛṣṇa expressly asks Bhīma to prove his strength on Jarāsandha and Bhīma kills him.

However Nilkantha's Devanāgarī version 2 (i) Devanāgarī Composite version 4[2] and Grantha 3 tell that Kṛṣṇa took a blade of grass and cut in into two in the middle after which Bhīmasena tore Jarāsandha through the centre. Grantha 3 further states that the two pieces of Jarāsandha joined together and he again started his duel with Bhīma. Then Kṛṣṇa again made a sign (by tearing a blade of grass and) throwing the two pieces in the reverse order. Bhīma again acted on this hint, threw the two pieces of Jarāsandha as directed and it was only then that Jarāsandha was killed after all.[3]

Many ill omens were described by Nārada to Yudhiṣṭhira[4] though even in the additional passage they are not described as taking place actually. The Constituted Text makes no reference to them. Yudhiṣṭhira, however, asks Vyāsa whether they have taken their effect in the death of Śiśupāla and predict calamities no more. Vyāsa says that the ill omens will take effect after thirteen years and that the whole Kṣatriya race will be destroyed through Yudhiṣṭhira by the fault of Duryodhana and the prowess of Bhīma and Arjuna.[5] Hearing this Yudhiṣṭhira becomes sad and resolves to be pious, upright and agreeable in order to avoid the calamity.[6]

Duryodhana falsely reports to Dhṛtarāṣṭra that Draupadī laughed at him along with her maid servants[7] when he tumbled mistaking a crystal hall for a pond.[8] Neither in the Text, nor in the additional passages is there any reference to Draupadī's making fun of

[1] II Ch. 21.20-21 & Ch. 22.4.
[2] II 253*.
[3] II 8†.
[4] II 28† Southern.
[5] II 30† Kashmiri 2-4 Nilkantha's Devanāgari Version 5. Southern Recension.
[6] II 30† Continued by Nilkantha's Devanāgari Composite 4.5. only.
[7] II 46.3.
[8] II 32† Telugu 1 Grantha 3-6.

Duryodhana. In the Constituted Text Bhīma, his younger brothers and their servants enjoy the joke at the cost of Duryodhana.[1] However, in the Text Duryodhana makes no reference to this indignity to Śakuni, what he cannot bear is the amazing prosperity of Yudhiṣṭhira.

In the Text it is Duryodhana who asks Vidura to bring Draupadī to the Council Hall after she has been forfeited as a bait. Vidura, of course, refuses, and then Prātikāmin and afterwards Duḥśāsana is sent, who drags the helpless lady to the hall.

In a passage running into 150 lines found in the Southern Recension, however, Draupadī is described as being forcibly brought to the assembly hall at the instigation of Karṇa by Duḥśāsana. She piteously cries and appeals to Bhīṣma, Droṇa, Aśvatthāman, Vidura, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Gāndhārī and Kuntī whereas in the Text her appeal is in general to the good sense of the Kurus. In the passage under consideration, Vidura tries to intervene but Dhṛtarāṣṭra turns a deaf ear and Duryodhana uncovers his left thigh. Bhīma vows to kill him and step on his head whereas in the Text he vows to break his thigh. Bhīma and Arjuna want to fight then and there, but Yudhiṣṭhira checks them saying that he himself feels like burning Karṇa but his wrath is somehow pacified at the sight of the latter's feet.

Strangely enough, there is no reference to the disrobing of Draupadī in this fairly long passage. In the Text it is after the attempted disrobing of Draupadī that Bhīma takes the vow of breaking Duryodhana's thigh, vengeance against Duḥaśāsana being mentioned while he is doing his dastardly deed. In the passage under consideration, it is Draupadī who pointedly says that Duryodhana's thigh will be his death and that Bhīma will drink the blood of Duḥśāsana, after Bhīma had taken these vows earlier.[2]

In the Text, while Duḥśāsana is trying to snatch away the the garment of Draupadī, it is described that similar garments appear one after another until there is quite a heap of them and Duḥśāsana sits down, exhausted and ashamed. There is no explanation how this miracle takes place. Nilkantha's Devanagari and Devangari Composite versions (marg) 4.5. (marg sec. m) relate that Draupadī thought of Kṛṣṇa and appealed to him in

[1] II 43. verses 5-9.

[2] II 38†.

devotional terms. Listening to her words, Kṛṣṇa was touched and leaving his bed came there in compassion.[1] Southern Recension (except Grantha 1 Malayali 2) says that she appealed to Kṛṣṇa but is silent on the outcome.[2] Nilakantha's Devanāgari version and Devenāgari Composite version 4.5 (marg sec.m.) Devanāgari Composite 2.3.6. Kashmiri 1-4 Maithili 1-4 Maithili 1 Devanāgari 1-6 and Grantha 5[3] describe that concealed Dharma clothed her with various garments. References to Draupadī's appeal to Kṛṣṇa are also found in Grantha 2[4] and Telegu 1 Grantha 4.5.[5] On the other hand Kashmiri 2.4 Maithili 1 Devanāgari Composite Bengali, and Telugu versions 1 Grantha 5 (Nilakantha's Commentary glosses) say that hundreds of garments appeared because of observance of Dharma.[6]

Draupadī herself says later that she was protected by the favour bestowed on her by the sun and escaped the infamy of being disrobed.[7]

However, we find, that Abhimanyu, while reminding Karṇa of the many misdeeds perpetrated by Kauravas, says that they had taken Draupadī to the council hall and actually disrobed her.[8] In the Constituted Text Dhṛtarāṣṭra appears to be afraid that the Pāṇḍavas might remember after a long time of Draupadī being divested of her clothes and reduced to a miserable condition.[9]

Even though deliberate and systematic attempt was made at introducing Kṛṣṇa element in the Epic, the evidence rouses doubts whether the disrobing of Draupadī was actually attempted. As pointed out earlier, there is no reference to this shameful incident in a fairly long passage of 150 lines. There it has been said that Draupadī was brought to the council hall and given an undignified treatment. Karṇa is reported as going to the extent of saying that Duryodhana may enjoy her like a concubine, Duryodhana is described as shamelessly exposing his thighs to the sight of Draupadī but all this, however shameful and unbecoming,

[1] II 543.*
[2] II 547.*
[3] II 544.*
[4] II 545.*
[5] II 550.*
[6] II 553.*
[7] XII 3† Devanāgari Composite 7 Southern Recension Lines 94-96.
[8] VII 6† Kashmiri 2 (marg).
[9] IX 4.17.

is nothing in comparison with the monstrous attempt at disrobing Draupadī in public.

Iyer in his book *Notes of a Study of the Preliminary Chapters of the Mahābhārata* examines this incident and comes to the conclusion that what might have been attempted could simply be the removal of Draupadī's upper garment. He refers to a practice in Kerala according to which a high caste lady found to be guilty of immoral behaviour is publicly tried and on her guilt being proved, her umbrella with which she is till then covering herself from public gaze is struck away by a man of low community. The woman is then allowed to go but she is not supposed to use an umbrella thenceforth, the umbrella being a sort of a status symbol. Similarly in North India to take away the upper garment of a woman *(chādar utāranā)* is the worst insult that one can put a woman to and an attempt to do so may result in bloodshed.

What took place in the case of Draupadī was perhaps that Duryodhana and his friends maintained that she had become a 'maid servant' after Yudhiṣṭhira had staked and lost her. They tried to show her proper place by taking away her upper garment.[1] Of course considering her status as an erstwhile empress of India and her relationship to the Kauravas, even this was a base act.

Reference to the subsequent portion of the *Mahābhārata* also reveals that the Pāṇḍavas and other relations of Draupadī resented the very fact that Draupadī was brought to the council hall *(Sabhām anitā)*. References to Draupadī's attempted or achieved disrobing are very few in comparison to references to her simply being brought to the Council Hall.[2]

Book III (Āraṇyakaparvan)

The Sun god offers a copper pot to king Yudhiṣṭhira in which Draupadī will get as much food as she wants.[3] In the text, the god gives the boon that for twelve years the food in Yudhiṣṭhira's kitchen will be inexhaustible.[4]

[1] pp. 168-201.

[2] IV 17.2 VII 107.13; 168.9 VIII 5.78-80 XI 14.7 XV 23.9-13 XVIII 1.9.

[3] III 21 *Kashmiri 2 Nilakantha's Devanāgari version Devanāgari Composite 5.6 (both latter marg.)

[4] III 4.3. There being no reference either in the Text or in the additional passage to food being available only till Draupadī had finished her meals, except in III 25† the whole of Durvāsās episode becomes meaningless.

Indra once sees Arjuna's eyes attracted by Urvaśī, so he asks Chitrasena, the Gandharva, to send her to Arjuna so that he may be equally proficient in the Art of Love as he has become in the Art of War. Urvaśī is only too glad to do the assignment. Finishing her toilet and employing all her captivating art she goes to meet Arjuna, but on learning her mission Arjuna is simply shocked. He explains that he was gazing so intently at her only in admiration as she was the wife of Purūravas, an ancestor of the race of Kurus, and hence she is for Arjuna as worthy of respect as Kuntī and Śacī. Urvaśī tries her best to explain that she is after all a heavenly courtezan and that Arjuna need not have such inhibitions. Arjuna again declares that she is the Mother of his Race and he can only hold her in the same respect as Kuntī, Madrī, and Śacī or even more.

Urvaśī feels frustrated and in anger curses him to be a eunuch.

Indra knows what has happened and congratulating Arjuna on surpassing even auster sages in self-control, points out that the curse would serve him as a boon because during the one year that is to be spent *incognito* this curse would stand in good stead. Arjuna is then greatly delighted.

A *phalaśruti* follows that one who listens of this account of Arjuna's behaviour will never even think of evil deeds and that kings being free of faults like lust, hypocricy and passion, will be delighted in heaven.[1]

Apart from this *phalaśruti*, the fact that this episode occurs only in a few versions of the Northern Recension and in the Southern Recension as a whole, makes it clear that it is a later addition, most probably made by Southern redactors. We find later on a reference to the curse of Urvaśī in some manuscripts of two Southern Versions only where Arjuna narrates the incident to Uttara.[2]

The famous words of Yudhiṣṭhira, "When there is a conflict between us, the Kauravas are hundred and we are five (against them), but when there is a conflict with outsiders we are a hundred and five (Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas together)," are inserted by various versions[3] like Nilkantha Devanāgari 2, Telugu 2 Grantha 2, Devanāgari Composite 1 (marg), Malayali 1 though the spirit embodied in these words is found in the Text (vide III 232. vv 2 and 3).

[1] III 6†Kashmiri 2,4 Bengali, Chaturbhuja's Devanāgari Nilakantha's Devanāgari and Devanāgari Composite versions 1-6 S.

[2] IV 757*Telugu 1 Grantha 2 and 758* Telugu 2 Grantha 1, 3.

[3] III 1119*1121*, 1122.*

Karṇa, starts on a march of victory and returns successfully after conquering all kings of the world, Duryodhana is highly pleased and says that he got from Karṇa what Bhīṣma, Droṇa, Kṛpā or Bāhlīka could not give him.[1] References to Karṇa's world conquest are found in IX 173* (Telugu and Grantha lines 4.5) and even in the accepted Text in VII 4.4.7, but not at the proper place in the *Āraṇyakaparvan*. The Durvāsas episode is found in some manuscripts of Chaturbhuja's Devanāgari, Nilkantha's Devanāgari, Devanāgari Composite, and Grantha versions only. It runs as follows:

While Duryodhana is planning in the company of Karṇa, Duḥaśāsana, etc. how best he could bring about some harm to the Pāṇḍavas, Durvāsas, the irascible sage, comes with 10,000 pupils to visit him. He proves to be a very whimsical guest especially in the matter of his meals. (Chaturbhuja's Devanāgari 1 states that the sage was trying to find an excuse so that he could curse the wicked Duryodhana and dethrone him.) Duryodhana, however, satisfies all his whims and the sage, being pleased, offers a boon. The villain asks as a favour that Durvāsas should honour Yudhiṣṭhira by paying a visit only after Draupadī herself has finished her dinner and is resting.[2] Durvāsas does accordingly only creating a difficult situation for the Pāṇḍavas who find it impossible to feed the ten thousand and one Brahmins (when the plate given by the sun god could not produce a grain of food). Draupadī then thinks of Kṛṣṇa and prays to him for help. Kṛṣṇa immediately comes but asks for food himself. Draupadī points out the difficulty about the plate from the sun god but Kṛṣṇa would not listen to it. He demands the plate and seeing a leaf of vegetable on a side of the same, eats it.

In the meanwhile, the sages who have gone for a bath in the river, find themselves full, all of a sudden. Durvāsas now feels ashamed that the food prepared by the Pāṇḍavas will be wasted. So without taking leave of the Pāṇḍavas, he takes to his heels together with his numerous pupils. When Sahadeva comes to the river to find why the guests were so late, he finds them nowhere. Other ascetics on the spot explain what has happened. Kṛṣṇa reassures the Pāṇḍavas

[1] III 24†Kashmiri 4 Devanāgari Composite (except Devanāgari Composite 4) Grantha 3.

[2] The idea appears to be that food will not be available after Draupadi had taken her meal but no clear reference to this effect is found either in the Text or in any additional passage except in the passage under discussion.

that Durvāsas will trouble them no more.[1] Devanāgari Composite version also describes the Durvāsas episode very briefly in ten lines at a wrong place.[2]

This incident seems to have been introduced for the glorification of Kṛṣṇa. It will be dealt with in that perspective in the next chapter.

Book IV (Virāṭaparvan)

We find that King Virāṭa is not a complete stranger to the Pāṇḍavas according to Telugu 1 Grantha and Malayali 1 versions which mention him as one of the persons whom Yudhiṣṭhira had consulted before undertaking the Rājaśuya sacrifice.[3]

Draupadī is tired of walking to the capital of Virāṭa. In the Text Yudhiṣṭhira asks Arjuna to carry her and he does so immediately.[4] In the Southern Recension, however, Yudhiṣṭhira asks Nakula and Sahadeva to perform the agreeable task, but strangely enough they decline. Arjuna, however, when told to do so, is only too glad.[5]

The Southern Recension makes Draupadī almost to give herself out by declaring that she was seized by hair even in the presence of her husbands and that after that she had to sustain herself by fruits, roots, etc. in a forest for twelve years, without any house to stay in.

The history of Kīcaka is also narrated by the Southern Recension as follows—King Kekaya was the chief of charioteers. Kīcaka was his eldest son, from Mālavi, and he had one hundred and six more sons. Sudeṣṇā, the queen of Virāṭa was a daughter of Mālavi's sister.[6]

In the text, Virāṭa refuses to pass any judgment on Kīcaka's behaviour to Draupadī but Devanāgari Composite 9 makes him human enough to intercede in the helpless lady's favour, pointing out to various ill omens and also drawing Kīcaka's attention to the fact that Sairandhrī has five Gandharvas for her husbands, who would certainly kill him if he persists in molesting their wife.[7] When

[1] III 25†Charutbhuja's Devanāgari 1 Nilkantha's Devanāgari and Devanāgari Composite 1 2.3. Grantha 3.

[2] III 30†.

[3] II 150.*

[4] IV 5.6.8.

[5] IV 143* 145* 146*.

[6] IV 208*.

[7] IV 22†Devanāgari Composite 9.

Kīcaka kicks Draupadī, Bhīma looks at a tree intending to uproot it and kill Kīcaka with it; but Yudhiṣṭhira cautions him.[1]

After hearing about Kīcaka's death at the hands of an unknown champion of the Sairandhrī, Duryodhana shrewdly suspects who the two persons could be and at once decides to invade Virāṭa's capital to find out the fact.[2]

Yudhiṣṭhira offers to fight the Trigartas and also hints that Bhīma, Nakul, and Sahadeva also may fight.[3]

A badly fitting replica of a scene at the end of the *Draupadīharaṇa* in the *Āraṇyakaparvan* (III 256) is found in Southern 1 Kashmiri, Bengali, and Devanāgari Composite versions where Bhīma wants to insult Suśarman, a king friendly to Duryodhana, at whose instance the latter has invaded Virāṭa's territory. But Yudhiṣṭhira lets Suśarman go with a mild warning,[4] as he has done in the case of Jayadratha.

Devanāgari Composite 7 describes a quarrel between Karṇa and Aśvatthāman. The latter praises Arjuna and scolds Karṇa for bragging. Karṇa on his part calls Aśvatthāman bad names, who being incensed, attacks Karṇa, sword and shield in hand. Duryodhana intervenes putting all blame on Karṇa and then Aśvatthāman is pacified.[5]

According to Telugu and Grantha 2, however, Aśvatthāman challenges Karṇa to fight with Arjuna in an insulting language. Duryodhana requests Aśvatthāman not to insult Karṇa.[6]

Book VI (Bhīṣmaparvan)

Yudhiṣṭhira says to Śalya, "Duryodhana will appoint you a charioteer of Karṇa, I am sure of it."[7] In the text Yudhiṣṭhira simply requests Śalya to make Karṇa feel diffident by playing him down.[8] In Book V Ch 8 of the Epic both Yudhiṣṭhira and Śalya are sure about the latter being requested to work as a charioteer of Karṇa.

[1] IV 27†Southern 28†Devanāgari Composite 4 (marg).

[2] IV 358*Southern.

[3] IV 559*Southern.]

[4] IV 32.†

[5] IV 42† Devanāgari Composite 7.

[6] IV 1027.*

[7] VI 129*Southern.

[8] VI 41, 81.

Śveta, a warrior on the side of Pāṇḍavas, attacks Śalya vigorously and defeats all the warriors who come to Śalya's rescue, until Bhīṣma comes to his aid. It is after a tough fight that Bhīṣma is able to kill Śveta.[1] It is not clear why a lengthy passage of 339 lines has been interpolated without any conceivable purpose.

Book VII (Droṇaparvan)

According to some Devanāgarī manuscripts Bhīṣma discloses the secret of Karṇa's birth to him in private which he had learnt from Nārada.[2]

However, in the Text though a meeting takes place between Bhīṣma and Karṇa, the former says nothing about the matter.[3]

Bhīṣma after disclosing the secret about Karṇa's birth urges him to join his brothers, the Pāṇḍavas, and end the war. Karṇa, however, tells him that he already knew the secret but he had been brought up by a charioteer when abandoned by Kuntī. He had also enjoyed the patronage of Duryodhana and he had irritated the Pāṇḍavas, so the past could not be retraced.[4]

Bhagadatta's wrinkles covered his eyes. So he had put a cloth bandage on his head to hold them together. At the advice of Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna tore away the bandage with his arrows and then Bhagadatta could not see anything because his eyes were covered with wrinkles. Consequently Arjuna could easily kill him.[5]

A sharp exchange of words takes place between Abhimanyu and Lakṣmaṇa, son of Duḥśāsana. The latter says, "Abhimanyu, don't fight. Go back to Pāṇḍavas." Abhimanyu smilingly replies, "Cousin, I shall certainly go, after I kill all these Kauravas."[6]

Abhimanyu and Lakṣmaṇa both strike each other with maces and fall down dead on the earth.[7]

[1] VI 4 †Bengali 3. 4. Devanāgari Composite 4.5. Nilakanthas' Devanāgari and Malayali 3-5 (omitting certain lines).

[2] VII 1†Devanāgari Composite 4. 7.8.

[3] VII 4.

[4] VII 2†Devanāgari Composite 4. 7.8. Nilakantha's Devanāgari.

[5] VII 224* Bombay and Kumbhakonam edns 225* Bengali (Bengali 1.3 marg) Nilakantha's Devanāgari 2 Devanāgari Composite 3.5.7., 226* Bombay and Kumbhakonam edns.

[6] VII 313*Kashmiri 2 (marg).

VII 330*Devanāgari 7.8.

Abhimanyu revives from swoon and is hungry and thirsty. He blames himself for not having achieved anything since Kauravas who hate Pāṇḍavas are alive. He then dies as the sun sets, but he has destroyed a crore of chariots and killed innumerable elephants, horses and foot soldiers including Lakṣmaṇa, the son of Duḥśāsana.[1] The Epic narrates that both the cousins had fallen unconscious on the ground. Lakṣmaṇa reviving first struck Abhimanyu dead while he was gaining consciousness.[2]

Karṇa taunts Bhīma of being proficient in scholarly pursuits and theoretical knowledge of weapons and missiles. He then touches Bhīma on his neck and remembers his promise to Kuntī.[3]

Bhīma challenges Karṇa for a wrestling bout and scolds him for boasting after being defeated many times, but Karṇa does not challenge.[4]

Bhīma has to sustain defeat at the hands of Karṇa because Kubera has cursed him to that effect when he went to take away the lotus flowers from the latter's garden and did not bow down to him.[5]

Bhūriśravas, the son of Somadatta defeated Sātyaki and was about to kill him but Arjuna rescued the latter just in the nick of time. An explanation of the victory of Bhuriśravas is given in the Text in VII 119 when Somadatta prays to Śiva for a son who would kill Śini's son, Śiva says that Śini has already got a boon from him. So Somadatta's son, i.e., Bhūriśravas would confound Śini's grandson, i.e., Sātyaki but he would not be able to kill him since the grandson would be under the protection of Keśava.[6] In the text, Somadatta asks for a son who would kick Śini's son in front of thousands of kings.[7]

Dhṛtarāṣṭra does not believe in the valour of Sātyaki.[8]

Bhīma catches hold of the yoke of Droṇa's chariot and pushes it back. He does so eight times.[9]

[1] VII 7†Kashmiri 2 (marg).
[2] VII 48. 11-13.
[3] VII 816*Devanagari Composite 6.
[4] VII 917*Kashmiri 2 (marg). 4 Devanagari Composite 1.5.
[5] VII 918*Devanagari Composite 2.5.
[6] VII 986*Telugu and Grantha 2.
[7] VII 119.17.
[8] VII 725*Bengali 1.3.5. Chaturbhuja's Devanagari 1.
[9] VII 995*Nilakantha's Devanagari 1 Bombay edition.

Bhīma laments after having killed Vikarṇa, that he had to kill the latter only because he had taken an oath to kill all the Kauravas.[1]

The sun is about to set and Arjuna has only a few minutes left for fulfilling his vow regarding killing Jayadratha, Kṛṣṇa through his power deprives the sun of his lustre. Kauravas are naturally delighted and Jayadratha begins to look at the sun stretching his neck. Kṛṣṇa points to Arjuna that Jayadratha is looking at the sun. Arjuna immediately shoots an arrow.[2] Telugu and Grantha 2.5 add seven lines and narrate that Kṛṣṇa thinks of his discus and when it appears for his service, orders it to cover the sun so as to create the illusion of sunset.

Kṛṣṇa later on dispels darkness and then the Kauravas realize that, that was a trick played by Kṛṣṇa.[3]

In the Text, Arjuna reaches the spot where Jayadratha is being guarded very carefully by Kaurava army and severes his head. There is no reference to the miraculous feats of Kṛṣṇa.[4]

Bhīma smashes one wheel of Karṇa's chariot but Karṇa continues to fight from the same chariot.[5]

Sages scold Droṇa for having burnt with the Brahman missile people who had no knowledge of any missile at all, and ask him to lay down arms immediately so that he may not do such a villainous deed again.[6] In the Text sages blame Droṇa only for setting at naught the rules of the game, no mention being made of any specific lapse on Droṇa's part.[7]

Aśvatthāman swears to Sātyaki that he will kill all the Pāñcalas and Somakas even though the armies of Pāṇḍavas and Vṛṣṇis were to protect them.[8] This is an attempt to forecast future events. In the Text Aśvatthāman is making a more moderate claim viz., that

[1] VII 980*Nilakantha's Devanagari 2 Devanagari Composite 3.5.6.

[2] VII 1009*Southern.

[3] VII 1025*Kashmiri 4 Bengali and Chaturbhuja's Devanagari, Nilakantha's Devanagari and Devanagari Composite 1.5.

[4] VII 121.

[5] VII 1301*Northern version (Southern 2 Kashmiri 5 missing).

[6] VII 1308*Bengali and Chaturbhuja's Devanagari 1 Nilakantha's Devanagari and Devanagari Composite 3.5.6.

[7] VII 164.86-92.

[8] VII 1412*Northern version (except Devanagari Composite 6. Kashmiri 5 missing) Telugu 1.

Sātyaki will not be able to protect Dhṛṣṭadyumna against Aśvatthāman.[1]

Book VIII (Karṇaparvan)

Bhīma is about to cut the tongue of Karṇa, but Śalya dissuades him pointing out that Arjuna must be given a chance to fulfil his vow of killing Karṇa. Bhīma yields unwillingly, stating at the same time how Karṇa had taunted Draupadī in the presence of the Pāṇḍavas.[2]

Yudhiṣṭhira mentions Bhīma and remembers Abhimanyu and Ghatotkaca while scolding Arjuna for not killing Karṇa.[3]

Arjuna makes a comparison unfavourable to Yudhiṣṭhira with Nakula, Sahedeva, Dhṛṣṭadyumna, sons of Draupadī, Yudhāmanyu, Uttamaujas, and Śikhandin.[4]

The serpent Aśvasena assumes the form of an arrow and enters the quiver of Karṇa in order to take revenge on Arjuna because of the Khāṇḍava massacre.[5]

Duryodhana harangues his army on the futility of running away after Karṇa had been killed.[6]

II CHARACTERIZATION

There appears to be difference of opinion on the estimates of some characters like Karṇa and Yudhiṣṭhira among the redactors. Some redactors have taken opportunities of glorifying some popular characters like Arjuna and Bhīma while others have been eloquent about persons involved in such incidents as the disrobing of Draupadī. This has been done through words placed in the mouths of characters in the Epic itself.

ELDERS IN THE COURT OF HASTINĀPUR

One Vyasaïd cannot understand why the respectable elders in the court of Hastināpur did not interfere while the most shameful

[1] VII 171.48.
[2] VII 11†.
[3] VIII 20†.
[4] VIII 21† 22†.
[5] VIII 40†Kashmiri 4 Bengali 1-5, Nilakantha's Devanagari 1-8 Telugu 2 Maithili 1 Arjunamisra's Commentary.
[6] VIII 43†Kashmiri 4 Maithili 1 Bengali Da, Nilakantha's Devanagari 1 Devanagari Composite 1.3-5-7,LL 116-131.

incident was taking place before their very eyes. He expresses his disapproval of the conduct of these people by making Dhṛṣṭadyumna ask Arjuna, "How could Draupadī be treated like a prostitute in the presence of the pious and great elders? Why did these high souled ones close their mouths? Were they deaf, dumb or blind? Did Bhīṣma, Droṇa and Kṛpā behave rightly in coming to fight against grand-children and pupils?[1]

Bhīṣma

Bhīṣma's character is highlighted by saying that Bhīṣma does not want to fight with one who refuses to fight, who is friendly, who has laid down his arms, who is not participating in fight, one who has fallen down (or is an outcaste), who has taken off his armour, one running away, or frightened, or who has surrendered, a woman or having a woman's name, one who is inflicted with pain, who is the only son of his father (or who has only one son), who has no issue or who is lowborn[2] At another place, however, he is made to look like a traitor by making him declare that he has promised victory to Pāṇḍavas.[3]

Some Śaradā and Kashmiri manuscripts want to hold Bhīsma responsible for the miscarriage of justice and the consequent holocaust. According to these Kṛṣṇa rushes at Bhīṣma and says, "You are at the root of this destruction. A good and just minister should either dissuade a king indulging in deceitful dice and trespassing the bounds of good behaviour and who is a bane to his family as being one with his mind perverted by Destiny." Bhīṣma replies, "A king is the greatest deity. True, Kaṁsa was deserted by the Yādavas in their interest, but the Kuru king (Duryodhana) though given wholesome advice was not prepared to listen. His mind was perverted by Destiny. If a person is not in a mood to listen to what is in his own interest, what can an adviser do?"[4] In the Text Kṛṣṇa simply wants to kill Bhīṣma and Droṇa and others in order to please Arjuna and other Pāṇḍavas. There is no attempt to hold Bhīṣma responsible for the fratricidal war.[5]

[1] VII 1379*Grantha 1 Malyali.
[2] VI 125*.
[3] VI 438*.
[4] VI 204* Kashmiri -2.
[5] VI 55.84.

Droṇa

Droṇa was unsuccessful in killing Dhṛṣṭadyumna but Droṇa's face is saved by making him say that he will not in any case kill Dhṛṣṭadyumna, since he was created to kill Droṇa[1]

Dhṛṣṭadyumna on his part is sought to be justified in his murder of Droṇa. Dhṛṣṭadyumna calls Droṇa a sinner, a wicked man and a Brahmin only in name and asks why he should not kill the man who had killed his father.[2]

DHṚTARĀṢṬRA

Sañjaya holds Dhṛtarāṣṭra responsible for the fate of his sons.[3]

Dhrtarāṣṭra comes in for a lot of criticism. Lamenting outwardly after the Varanāvata fire, he is said to be happy in his heart.[4] He shifts blame of Pāṇḍavas' banishment to Śakuni and says that he does not like the whole thing. He further says that Dharma is no help since the Pāṇḍavas are suffering hardship in the forest,[5] whereas in the text Dhṛtarāṣṭra blames Vidura for siding with the Pāṇḍavas and turns him out on which Vidura goes to the latter.[6]

Sañjaya blames Dhṛtarāṣṭra for not listening to wholesome advice of Vidura and other well-wishers. The poor blind king is even represented as being a time server. Dhṛtarāṣṭra says, "After Bhīṣma and Droṇa have been killed, I am prepared to grant to Yudhiṣṭhira the wealth that I envied him before.[7]

PĀṆḌAVAS

The Pāṇḍavas are spoken of in glowing terms "Nara (Arjuna) and Nārāyaṇa (Kṛṣṇa) cannot be killed in battle. The remaining four Pāṇḍavas also are declared by a great sage in a Purāṇa as impossible to be killed, says Bhīṣma[8] "Foolish Duryodhana has no idea about the valour of Pāṇḍavas. Pāṇḍavas are invincible. I can only do my best" says Droṇa[9] "Even gods together with Indra

[1] VII 44* Northern Version (Śaradā 2 missing).
[2] VII 1383* Teluga and Grantha 2.4 Malayali 3.5.
[3] VII 988* Bengali and Caturbhuja's Devanagari 1 Devanagari 5.
[4] I 1488* Telugu 1 Grantha 1, 2.4.
[5] III 24* Telugu 2 Grantha 2-4.
[6] III 5. Verses 16-20.
[7] VII 1379* Southern.
[8] VI 268* Devanagari Composite.
[9] VI 274* Southern.

cannot conquer the Paṇḍavas" says Bhīṣma.[1] "Whoever of the Pāṇḍavas survives the rest, will surely kill the Kauravas" fears Duryodhana. Bhīṣma tells Karṇa that Pāṇḍavas will conquer the Kauravas, so all that Karṇa could do was to fight bravely without conceit.[2]

KAURAVAS AND THEIR ALLIES

On the contrary the Kauravas are shown in a very unfavourable light. Seeing Droṇa killed, Kaurava warriors flee, urging their relatives also to run away.[3] Even great warriors in the Kaurava army like Aśvatthāman, Śalya, Kṛpā etc., are shown as abandoning Bhīṣma and running away when the Pāṇḍavas along with Sātyaki, Dhṛṣṭadyumna and others discharge arrows at them.[4]

Yudhiṣṭhira

Yudhiṣṭhira is spoken of in glowing terms. Forgetting the story about Yudhiṣṭhira's birth, Dhṛtarāṣṭra is made to describe Yudhiṣṭhira as having taken after his father (Pāṇḍu):[5] Nahuṣa pays high compliments to Yudhiṣṭhira. He says, "Fathers get good sons through observance of Dharma. Now what Dharma did Dharma observe that he got a son like you? Dharma is really very fortunate to have you for his son."[6]

He is depicted as being very soft hearted and having a sensitive conscience. Yudhiṣṭhira says to Bhīṣma, "I consider death superior to life, because Duryodhana, that villain and bane of the family, has not the misfortune to see you lying on the ground wounded by arrows. I wish I was killed on the battlefield. Indeed, the creator created us as sinners."[7]

Yudhiṣṭhiras' attitude in the whole Kīcaka affair is so much intolerable to Draupadī that she exclaims, "May no woman give

[1] VI 439* Southern 381* Southern.

[2] VII 35* Nilakantha's Devanagari 1. Devanagari Composite 4. 7.8.

[3] VII 1346* Northern Version (except Devanagari Composite 6; Kashmiri 5 missing).

[4] VII 480* Telugu 1,2 Grantha 1.4 Malayali 1.4.

[5] XV 32* Devanagari Composite 4.6.8. Telugu 1-4 Grantha 1-5 Malayali 1-4.

[6] III 20†Kashmiri 2.4.

[7] XIII 8*VI Bengali and Nilakantha's Devanagari Devanagari Composite 1-10.

birth to such a son as you!"[1] This is another estimate of the character of the Dharmaputra.

Bhīma

Bhīma is portrayed as the same daredevil that we find him in the Epic. The Nārāyaṇa missile would leave Bhīma when he said 'Hum' and come back again. Devas and Gandharvas are astonished at this feat of Bhīma.[2] In the Text Bhīma is surrounded by sparks from the missile so Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa run to Bhīma and drag him down his chariot.[3] Droṇa's discharge of arrows was met by Bhīma as if with closed eyes (i.e. very easily).[4] Bhīma did not kill Karṇa though he could do so, for he wanted Arjuna to fulfil his vow.[5] Even when vanquished and pricked with the bow by Karṇa, Bhīma snatches the bow from Karṇa's hand and strikes him on the head. He breaks Karṇa's bow.[6]

Bhīma assures Kṛṣṇa that he can surely meet Duryodhana and kill him. He offers to fight with his mace while others are expected to look on.[7]

Arjuna

Arjuna is depicted by Vyāsaīds as a man of soft heart. He repents and blames himself and his calling of a Kṣatriya for being obliged to cut the arm of Bhūriśravas. He also curses Duryodhana for whose sake Bhūriśravas has to suffer this torture.[8]

According to some other versions Arjuna showed hesitation to kill Bhūriśravas when locked in combat with another person.[9] In the Text Arjuna admires Bhūriśravas for his valour and yet cuts his arm, without any pricks of conscience.[10]

[1] IV 315* Southern.
[2] VII 1408* Telugu and Grantha 2. Malayali 3.5.
[3] VII 171.1.15.
[4] VI 365* Telugu and Grantha 366* Malayali.
[5] VII 910* Bengali, and Chaturbhuya's Devanagari 1 Nilakantha's Devanagari, Devanagari 2.3.5.
[6] VII 911* Kashmiri 4 Devanagari 1.5.2. VII 919* Telugu and Grantha 2-5.
[7] IX 203* Bengali, Devanagari (except Devanagari 11; D[3] marg S.
[8] VII 4†S.
[9] VII 950* Devanagari 2 Telugu and Grantha 1.4 Malayali 1-S.
[10] VII 117. verses 57-62.

Even his opponents are made to admit his superiority. Duryodhana compares him to Kārtavīrya Arjuna and describes the exploits of both, those of his cousin Arjuna in greater details in order to impress upon the mind of Dhṛtarāṣṭra that Arjuna is a dangerous foe and that he should not be left alone.[1] Duryodhana tells Karṇa that he did not know that Arjuna was staying in the house of Virāṭa, that is why the Kauravas have courage enough to plunder the Matsya country.[2]

Arjuna's syampathisers extol him much. "Enough to cite the instance that Arjuna vanquished Aśvatthāman, Kṛpā and also the self-styled brave man Karṇa," says Bhīṣma.[3] Aśvatthāman scolds Karṇa for posing as superior to Arjuna. He dwells upon Arjuna's achievements including his fight with god Śiva.[4]

Arjuna's friends are naturally eloquent in his praise, Yudhiṣṭhira says that Arjuna is a unique hero, able to fight in many and wonderful ways.[5] "Arjuna while fighting with the Saṁśaptakas accomplished a deed that was even difficult for Indra, Yama, and Kubera," says Kṛṣṇa.[6] He extols Arjuna and likens him to himself. He is deemed as equal to all the eighteen Akśauhiṇīs put together and capable of killing great Kaurava warriors, gods and demigods and even of destroying the three worlds.[7] Arjuna excels Droṇa in many respects. He possesses all the accomplishments of Droṇa and some additional ones of his own.[8] As wind drives away locusts so does Arjuna dispell the shower of arrows discharged by Karṇa.[9]

Karṇa

The Southern Recension appears to be critical about Karṇa. It makes Karṇa practical enough to ask Indra for the divine missile in return for his armour and earrings.[10] In the Text, Indra, amazed

[1] II. 39†T1.
[2] IV 46†S LL 23.24.
[3] VI 378* N (D3 om lines 1-2).
[4] VII 1144* K4 BDc1 Dn D1.3.5.6.
[5] XII 26*S (T2 G1 om).
[6] VII 207*N (S2 missing).
[7] IX 5*S (except M1; T3.4 missing cv.).
[8] VII 1289* G1 M.
[9] VII 999 KN (except B4, Ś2 missing).
[10] I 1125*S (except G6) D4 (marg. Sec. m.) DS.

at the generosity of Karṇa, gives the missile himself.[1] Devanagari Composite 7 is also unfair enough to remark through Aśvatthāman that Arjuna is brave with his bow, Karṇa with day-dreams.[2]

Other versions appear to be more favourably disposed towards Karṇa. Indra had created Ghatotkaca expressly for the purpose of Karṇa (so that Karṇa might kill him), an opponent of Karṇa, the unique hero.[3] Bhīṣma admits that Karṇa had qualities like valour, generosity, respect for Brahmins and that Karṇa was equal to Arjuna in archery and to Kṛṣṇa in physical strength, also that Karṇa was truthful, as lustrous as the sun, invincible in war and superior to any human being.[4] Bhīma agrees that Karṇa has no peer in this world.[5] Kṛṣṇa says to Arjuna, "I do not consider Karṇa an ordinary warrior and do not like battle with him. He is capable of conquering us but we even with all our army and vehicles cannot defeat him. It is through his faults, mistakes and compassion that he is defeated off and on."[6]

The other side of the shield is also shown. Arjuna taunts Karṇa about running away frequently from the battlefield. He points out that Bhīma did not insult Karṇa though the latter was running away too often whereas Karṇa after once conquering Bhīma spoke to him harsh words, which was quite in keeping with his low birth. Even Indra cannot achieve complete victory.[7] In the Bengali Version we find Arjuna taunting Karṇa about his low birth and reminding him that it was Bhīma's family tradition to fight while that of Karṇa something else.

He did what was befitting him in addressing insulting words to Bhīma after accidentally defeating him only once, while the latter even after defeating Karṇa repeatedly did not speak a single harsh word to him. Karṇa, who was like a fox insulted a Kṣatriya.[8] Again, "Brave men do not boast nor do they insult a vanquished enemy, but you endowed with only ordinary understanding prattle

[1] I 104. vv. 19, 20.
[2] IV 42†.
[3] VI 251* Da Dn1 D5.
[4] VII 1†D4.7.8. VII 2†Dn.
[5] VII 914*DS.
[6] VII 1040 *K5 Dn1 D5.7.
[7] VII 1069*B (except B4) Dc1.
[8] VII 1065*S (except M3.4.).

through foolishness much that is inconsistent, not fit to be heard and not well considered," says Arjuna to Karṇa.[1]

Though Karṇa praises the skill of Abhimanyu[2] he is sly enough to describe valour, skill and other accomplishments of Arjuna and try to absolve Droṇa from the charge of negligence, at the same time covertly suggesting that the latter was too weak for the battle-field.[3]

Duryodhana

Strangely enough even Duryodhana has found some admirers. Some Bengali and Devanāgarī manuscripts make Kṛṣṇa say that none of the Pāṇḍavas is able to face Duryodhana in mace fight if it is fought according to the rules of the game. Bhīma is supposed to be his equal, if at all.[4] Not tolerating the challenge of Bhīma, Duryodhana gets ready for fight like a rutting elephant and Pāṇḍavas think that with his mace he looks like Mountain Kailāśa with a peak. He had no fear, trepidation, exhaustion or regrets. He stood ready for fight like a lion. Some of these very manuscripts go to the length of making little of the villainies of Duryodhana and representing him as being superior to and more fortunate than the Pāṇḍavas. According to these Duryodhana says, "Whatever villainies of mine you have mentioned, I committed them without hesitation. My friends have been killed so also have been yours. If I were to die now, that would be a covetable death brought about by Destiny. Nobody can conquer me in a just fight. If you conquer me through fraud, you will only gain notoriety and sin and will certainly repent".[5] Again these Versions make Duryodhana boast that all the Pāṇḍavas put together are no match for him and that he will prove it, though it is not proper to boast of one's abilities.[6] However, in these very Versions, Yudhiṣṭhira reminds Duryodhana that they had killed Abhimanyu in exactly the same

[1] VII 1069*B (except B4) Dc.

[2] VII 322*D7.8.

[3] VII 1098*BDC1 Dn1.2 D5.

[4] IX 201*B1.2.5. Dn D1.5.10.

[5] IX 206* B2.5. Dn D9.

[6] IX 198* K3 BD (except D3.11).

circumstances in which Duryodhana finds himself, exhausted, and facing many enemies alone.[1]

The Southern Versions, however, depict Duryodhana as a despicable wretch, for caught by the Gandharvas while trying to put Pāṇḍavas to shame by exhibiting his wealth, he is shown as having the cheek to appeal to Yudhiṣṭhira, Nakula, and Sahadeva (understandably omitting Bhīma and Arjuna) for rescue in the name of the prestige of the Kuru Race.[2]

[1] IX 31.51. and IX 196* K3 BD (except Dn; D3 marg) C a.
[2] III 23†T2 GM.

CHAPTER THREE

THE KṚṢṆA LEGEND

KṚṢṆA is one of the most important characters of the *Mahābhārata*. Hindus have looked upon him as God incarnate for the last two thousand years at least. Western scholars have been sceptical about the *raison d'etre* of Kṛṣṇa in the Epic. A discussion of Kṛṣṇa's place in the *Mahābhārata* will be out of place in this work, hence we are here concerned only with the legend of Kṛṣṇa as we find it in the *Mahābhārata* and deviations from the same in its various versions.

Kṛṣṇa has already become a godhead in the Constituted Text. He is said to be the unmanifest and indestructible Brahman, eternal and ageless creator born among the Andhaka-Vṛṣṇis for promoting Dharma.[1]

Further, he is said to be Viṣṇu descended only in part at the bidding of Indra.[2] He and Balarāma are also described as being sprung from respectively the black and white hair of Viṣṇu.[3] He is, however, receiving a boon from Indra.[4]

Even his contemporaries looked upon him as the supreme god. Bhīṣma describes him as being not only superior to any human being in points of scholarship, valour, generosity, intellect, modesty, riches, etc., but also as the source of the universe and support of everything.[5] He addresses to Kṛṣṇa a very fervent hymn in all superlative terms, identifying him with the Brahman and all the powerful manifestations of Cosmic Power in the world.[6] He again

[1] I 57. 84-7.
[2] I 58, 50-1.
[3] I 189. 31.
[4] I 225. 13.
[5] II 35. 8-28.
[6] XII 47.

refers to Kṛṣṇa as the lord who is unthinkable.[1] Dhṛtarāṣṭra dwells on the exploits of Kṛṣṇa some of which are miraculous and befitting a divine being.[2] Yudhiṣṭhira addresses to Kṛṣṇa a hymn containing a hundred names.[3] Draupadī also identifies him with the Supreme Godhead.[4] Sañjaya believes that Kṛṣṇa is administering heaven, earth and under-region as if in sport, that Kṛṣṇa is superior to the three worlds put together.[5]

He was also very popular. When he was going to Hastināpura for carrying on negotiations with Kauravas, throngs of people were gathered with flowers to honour him and crowds were waiting just to have a look at him.[6] Even Brahmins were vying with each other to worship him.[7] Dhṛtarāṣṭra is very anxious about the arrangements for his reception and preparations to show him hospitality. People on the mountain Raivataka, gathered to celebrate a festival, greet Kṛṣṇa as a popular figure.[8]

Though a *Mahābhārata* expert of Dr. Sukthankar's stature holds that there is no passage in the epic which does not presuppose or which contradicts, his character as an incarnation of the Supreme Being,[9] the human side of Kṛṣṇa's character is also visible in the Epic. He himself says that he was not in Dvārakā when the fatal game of dice took place; otherwise he would have come and prevented it. He was fighting hard against Śālva at that time. He falls an easy victim to deception by Śālva and faints believing that Śālva has killed Vasudeva.[10]

On the battlefield also, when Droṇa covers Arjuna with arrows Kṛṣṇa perspires and sadly asks Arjuna where he was and whether he was alive.[11] Satyasena wounds Kṛṣṇa from whose hands the reins fall down.[12] Everybody thought that Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna were in the jaws of death when they were joined in combat with

[1] XII 111.24 ff.
[2] VII 10.
[3] XII 43.
[4] VII.
[5] V 66. 7 & 10.
[6] V 82. 14-18.
[7] V 82.13.
[8] a. XIV 58.15.
[9] *Meaning of Mahabharata*, Bombay (1937) p. 16.
[10] III 220.21-25.
[11] VII 18.21.
[12] VIII 19.13-16.

Bhagadatta.[1] Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna are both covered by arrows and everybody feels concerned about their safety.[2]

Some of his contemporaries looked upon him as an ordinary mortal. Śiśupāla, a cousin of Kṛṣṇa strongly objects to the precedence in honour given to Kṛṣṇa at the time of Yudhiṣṭhira's Rājasūya Sacrifice. He makes little of Kṛṣṇa's miraculous deeds and positively blames Kṛṣṇa for killing Kaṁsa.[3] Jarāsandha considers Bhīma as a worthier opponent than Kṛṣṇa.[4] Bhūriśravas looks upon Kṛṣṇa as low born.[5]

Yudhiṣṭhira prays to Kṛṣṇa for the successful fulfilment of Arjuna's vow. Except for the words Sarveśa (Lord of everything) and Bhaktavatsala (loving his devotees) the prayer could be addressed to any efficient and powerful friend.[6] Kṛṣṇa advises Arjuna to avoid Droṇa whom he (Arjuna) could not surpass.[7] Kṛṣṇa could not sleep nor find any delight while Karṇa had the missile of Indra. After Karṇa had wasted it on Ghatotkaca, Kṛṣṇa feels that Arjuna is free from the jaws of death, but he explains later on that he had himself been mesmerizing Karṇa so that Karṇa never thought of discharging it against Arjuna.[8] Both the armies consider that Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa have both been killed by missiles of Aśvatthāman.[9]

(i) KṚṢṆA AS A HUMAN BEING

Though Kṛṣṇa's divinity is almost complete in the *Mahābhārata*, there are at times human characteristics visible here and there. Even in the various versions one comes across these characteristics.

Kṛṣṇa and Pāṇḍavas come in contact for the first time at the time of Draupadī's Svayaṁvara. Kṛṣṇa was definitely stronger and more skilful in archery than Arjuna, even then he did not try to string the bow because he wanted to find out Pāṇḍavas since he

[1] VII 23.2.
[2] VIII 40-114.
[3] II 38.1-16.
[4] II 21.7.
[5] VII 118-15.
[6] VII 59. 8-13.
[7] VII 66.30.
[8] VII 157. 37-9.
[9] VII 172.38.

surely believed that next to himself Arjuna was the only human being that could achieve the feat. Arjuna's prowess would surely be a clue to the identity of the Pāṇḍavas.[1]

The Southern Recension describes a long drawn out battle between Kṛṣṇa and Śiśupāla in 99 lines where Kṛṣṇa kills his enemy after a good deal of fighting.[2] In the *Constituted Text* Kṛṣṇa simply severs Śiśupāla's head with his discus within a twinking of an eye.

Like any other mortal, Kṛṣṇa falls at the feet of Yudhiṣṭhira, who without showing any agitation that the Supreme Being is humbling Himself before him, raises him, smells him on the head and bids good bye.[3] Balarāma also greets Kṛṣṇa affectionately and Kṛṣṇa bows down to him respectfully.[4] Kṛṣṇa, wielder of the conch, the discus, and the mace and clad in a yellow garment, is waiting at the gate of Yudhiṣṭhira awaiting his orders and desirous of his *darśana*.[5]

The Southern Recension narrates the story of Kaṁsa and Kṛṣṇa against the background of Vasudeva's marriage, put in the mouth of Vaiśampāyana, shorn of most of the miraculous element except the transfer of Baladeva as a foetus to the womb of Rohiṇī and the guards of the prison being duped by the prowess of the infant Kṛṣṇa. No mention is made about Kṛṣṇa being an incarnation of Viṣṇu.[6]

"Even if all the Pāṇḍavas are killed in battle Viṣṇu (i.e., Kṛṣṇa) will subjugate all the kings and conquering the whole earth will give it to Draupadī or Kuntī", says Duryodhana.[7] The son of the Pāṇḍya king does not appear to have held Kṛṣṇa as anything more than an ordinary mortal, for he had planned to attack Dvārakā after Kṛṣṇa had killed his (Pandya's) father. He, however, was dissuaded by his well wishers and later on he joined the Pāṇḍavas in the Great Battle.[8] Arjuna says that Yudhiṣṭhira is as good a warrior as Vāsudeva.[9] Yudhiṣṭhira thinks that since

[1] I 1891* T1.3. G3-6 D1 (marg. sec. m.).
[2] II 28† S.
[3] II 27* V1 BDK 3-4.
[4] XIV 123* K1.4.5. D1.
[5] VII 431* K5 D7.
[6] II 6† S.
[7] VII 90* Ś.
[8] VII 169* N (Ś2 missing) cv.
[9] VII 445* N (Ś2 missing).

the conch Pāñcajanya is being blown, Kṛṣṇa is fighting after Arjuna has been killed.[1]

Sañjaya cannot think of anybody who could conquer Kṛṣṇa.[2] So he apparently thinks of Kṛṣṇa as a human being. Warriors on Pāṇḍava side suspect that Kṛṣṇa along with some other leaders must have been killed in the fight.[3] Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī and Vāsudeva, by nature proficient in the duties of Kṣatriyas, a Kṣatriya himself, best of the Dāśārhas is supposed to know (the meaning of) the Vedas.[4] Yudhiṣṭhira wonders how the words of Kṛṣṇa are going to prove true.[5] Yudhiṣṭhira doubts Kṛṣṇa's promise but reassures himself that the words of the Lord of Worlds will not prove false.[6]

So far Kṛṣṇa is seen in his human aspect. There are some traces of the deification of Kṛṣṇa, a sort of an intermediate stage in between the human Kṛṣṇa and the God Kṛṣṇa. For example:

"There neither was nor shall be any being like Kṛṣṇa", says Yudhiṣṭhira.[7] Yudhiṣṭhira expresses his thankfulness to Kṛṣṇa for the help and patronage he has rendered to Pāṇḍavas. For some time the description is on human plane but all of a sudden Yudhiṣṭhira begins to identify Kṛṣṇa with the Highest Brahman and the creator of the universe and starts speaking about him in an ardently devotional manner. But Kṛṣṇa gives all credit for killing Jayadratha to Arjuna and then Yudhiṣṭhira also pats the latter on the back.[8] The Umā Maheśvara Saṁvāda has for its introduction Kṛṣṇa's encounter with sages who extol him in the most glowing terms. Kṛṣṇa smilingly assures the sages that he is presently born a human and so has human limitations. So he desires to listen to whatever wonder the sages had heard or seen and then Nārada ralates the Umā Maheśvara Saṁvāda.[9] Gods cannot discharge their divine missions without a leader, therefore, the

[1] VII 764* S.
[2] VII 1254* B Dn2 D3.5.6.
[3] VII 21† G1 M1-2 1-31.
[4] XIII 1† D10S cv.
[5] IX 77* TG.
[6] IX 91* TG.
[7] XII 26* S (T 2 G 1 om.).
[8] VII 18†BDc1 Dn1.
[9] XIII 15†D10S LL 117-144.

omnipresent Lord has been born in human form as Kṛṣṇa.[1] Invisible gods, Gandharvas, sages, etc. praise Kṛṣṇa on the mountain Raivataka calling him the Almighty.[2]

ii) KṚṢṆA AS A DIVINE INCARNATION

Though Kṛṣṇa is already identified with the Supreme Being called Nārāyaṇa in the Epic, the versions, especially the Southern ones, emphasize still more his divine character, e.g., I 104† makes Vidura refer to Kṛṣṇa in devotional terms. According to this passage Kṛṣṇa has assumed human form only in sport, he wards off the evils of his devotees whom he loves and he resides in the mansion in the form of their minds.[3] Bengali and Devanagari Composite Versions describe him as the unborn one, born among men through his own desire.[4]

Telugu 1, 2 Grantha 1.4.5 add a passage of 42 lines to 180† in which Kṛṣṇa's divine nature and his close relations to Arjuna are clearly stated. In the original passage that is common to Nepali, Maithili, Bengali, Nilakantha's Devanagari, and Composite Devanagari Versions 1 Kashmiri 4, and Śāradā Recension no mention is made of Kṛṣṇa. The added passage, however, makes Droṇa say that Arjuna is superior to everybody in the world except Kṛṣṇa on whom the world depends, into whom it dissolves and from whom it springs. He is everything past, present and future. He has been requested by Indra to protect Arjuna, and Kṛṣṇa has promised that his friendship with Arjuna would be unique.

In the Sabhāparvan after Ch. 35.29 Southern Recension (with the exception of Grantha 4) inserts a long passage of 1612 lines, put in the mouth of Bhīṣma in which Kṛṣṇa's identity with the Supreme Nārāyaṇa is affirmed. His creation of the universe, killing of the demons Madhu and Kaitabha, his various incarnations like Pauṣkarasa, Boar, Man-Lion, Dwarf, Dattātreya, Paraśurāma (whose unsuccessful war against Śalva is described with the forecast that only Kṛṣṇa would kill him) Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, and Kalki, the future incarnation to take place at the end of the Kāli Age, are all

[1] XIII 16†V1 B Dn D1. 2,4-9,11.

[2] XIV 121* TGM3.

[3] I 104†T3 G2-4 LL 11-14.

[4] V 41†BD.

briefly described. Kṛṣṇa's accomplishments are dwelt on again at a great length (Lines 707-1612) ending with his war against Bāṇa.[1]

Two Devanāgarī manuscripts also join in the glorification of Kṛṣṇa and they stress his identity with Dāśarathi Rāma. At the command of Kṛṣṇa, Ghatotkaca goes to Laṅkā and asks Vibhīṣaṇa to pay tributes for Yudhiṣṭhira's sacrifice. Vibhīṣaṇa explains that Rāma had already told him that he himself would be born as Kṛṣṇa in the Yādava race in the Dvāpara Age. Vibhīṣaṇa then personally takes the tributes to Hastināpura and pays his respects to Kṛṣṇa.[2]

God Brahman is born out of Kṛṣṇa's navel. Demons Madhu and Kaitabha come to kill God Brahman when Śiva is born out of the angry Kṛṣṇa's forehead. Thus the two gods are born of Kṛṣṇa's body and are obedient to him.[3]

Kṛṣṇa plays with Brahman, Śiva, Indra and other gods again and again.[4] Śiva tells Jayadratha who wants to defeat all the Pāṇḍavas in battle at least once, that he could conquer all Pāṇḍavas except Arjuna because firstly the God himself has given the missile Pāśupata to Arjuna and secondly because Arjuna was under the protection of Kṛṣṇa who is an incarnation of Viṣṇu. Then Śiva goes on describing the dissolution of the universe, its creation once again, and then Viṣṇu's incarnations beginning with the Boar and then the Man-Lion, the Dwarf, and then Kṛṣṇa—omitting Bhārgava Rāma and Dāśarathi Rāma.[5] Malayali version speaks of him as the best among gods.[6]

Jāmadagnya Rāma, Nārada, Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana, Asita Devala, and Vālakhilyas have declared the greatness of Vāsudeva.[7] Nārāyaṇa is a form of Śeṣa.[8]

When he wants to punish Bhīṣma, Kṛṣṇa thinks of his sharp legendary discus Sudarśana and immediately it comes to his hand automatically.[9] In the Text Kṛṣṇa lifts up the discus and leaps from the chariot in order to chastise Bhīṣma.

[1] II 21†.
[2] II 17†D1.2.
[3] III 50* K2Dn.
[4] III 55* K2Dn.
[5] III 27 BD (except D1) G3 also III 1227* BD (except D1) G2.
[6] V 39* M.
[7] VI 263* D4S.
[8] VI 264* K3-5 D2T2.
[9] VI 201* TG.

Vāsudeva created the Universe. Brahmins came out of his mouth, Kṣatriyas of arms, Vaiśyas of thighs and Sūdras of feet. The Text also narrates in a later Book that Kṛṣṇa created a hundred Brāhmaṇas from his mouth, a hundred Kṣatriyas from his arms, a hundred Vaiśyas from his thighs and a hundred Śūdras from his feet.[1]

"The protector of the world, wielder of conch, discus and mace, holder of infinite power, destroyer of the Universe, Lord of everything, god of gods, the Highest Soul, the eternal one is protecting Arjuna", declares Bhīṣma.[2] "Strike as you please. I am your servant", says Bhīṣma.[3] "He who is difficult to attain even for Yogins has come here to kill me", rejoices Bhīṣma.[4] Devanagari Composite 6 adds a verse after VI 21.12 which says wherever there is Kṛṣṇa, there is victory. The added verse emphasizes Kṛṣṇa's divine character, calling him the Soul of the Vedas and Lord of everything.[5]

Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna are the Primeval Gods, Nara and Nārāyaṇa. Everybody cannot recognise Kṛṣṇa because of delusion. Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna can destroy anything they desire, but being in human form they are not doing so.[6] The Northern Recension (Śaradā Version 2 missing) adds 8 lines to the prayer addressed by Yudhiṣṭhira to Kṛṣṇa in which the latter is addressed as a divine being.[7]

"Viṣṇu of thousand heads unconquerable in battle is protecting Arjuna",[8] says Śiva to Jayadratha. The root of all Dharmas and the god of gods, Kṛṣṇa was the deity of Pāṇḍavas. How possibly could they be miserable ? Sañjaya wonders.[9]

Śiva says that he is himself Kṛṣṇa.[10] Vyāsa explains to Aśvatthāman that Kṛṣṇa is God omniscient and Arjuna is his power. Kṛṣṇa is one part out of a thousand born in the interest of gods and human beings.[11]

[1] XII 200.31.32.
[2] VI 380* S1 B3 D a Dn D2.4.5.6.8.T. G.
[3] VI 414* B Da Dn D5.8 (marg. sec. m.).
[4] VI 415* D2.6.
[5] VI 77.*
[6] VII 3†S.
[7] VII 440.*
[8] VII 302* KS D7.8.
[9] VII 308*S.
[10] VII 986* TG3.
[11] VII 1428* TG2-4 M3.4.

Yudhiṣṭhira has conquered the earth through the favour of Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the world.[1]

Kṛṣṇa is the Highest Brahman without beginning and end. Neither gods, nor Gandharvas, nor demons, nor serpents know his real nature.[2] Kṛṣṇa is spoken of in the most devotional terms as the Brahman without beginning, middle or end, beyond existence and non-existence, one but born manifold, birthless, deathless, self-existent, eternal, unknowable, beyond speculation.[3]

A devotee of Kṛṣṇa is superior even to one who performs ten Aśvamedha sacrifices, for the latter is born again, whereas Kṛṣṇa's devotee is released from the cycle of birth and death.[4] "Devotees dedicating their acts to Kṛṣṇa go beyond calamities," declares Bhīṣma.[5]

Kṛṣṇa created God Brahman of unlimited lustre, the ordainer of Vedic Lore, and Śiva (virūpākṣa) the chief of ghosts and Mother goddesses, also Kubera, the Lord of wealth, the chastiser of sinners and contemporary of the manes, Varuṇa, the Lord of the aquatic world, and Indra, the chief of gods.[6]

Śunake takes an oath that the one who has stolen the lotus stalks may incur the sin of worshipping some other deity and abandoning Vāsudeva.[7]

Bhīṣma on his bed of arrows is contemplating upon Kṛṣṇa even in his last moment.[8]

Śiva is made to describe the greatness of Vāsudeva.[9] Devanāgari Composite 4-9 add a verse and make Śiva an equal of Vāsudeva so that the two are in a position to know each other's greatness like "one serpent knowing the feet of another."[10]

God Brahman sleeps in the belly of Kṛṣṇa, and Śiva is born of his head, the stars come from his hair on the head, gods and demons from his hair on the body, the sages are born of his body and so also

[1] XII 58* T2.
[2] XII 70* K2.4V1 BD (except D4.8) S (G3 missing).
[3] XII 73*Ś1 KV1BDa Dn D1-8 T1G1.2.4.
[4] XII 94* K4Dn.
[5] XII 259*D7S Cv.
[6] XII 545 K6B6Dn1.4 D5D1.3.5.8 T2G1-3. 6M5.
[7] XIII 436*T1.
[8] XIII 715*T1 720*D10 TGM4.
[9] XIII 16†VI BDn D1.2.4-9.
[10] XIII 16†fn p. 1031.

the eternal worlds. He is the mansion of the creator and of all the gods. He is the creator and the destroyer of the world, animate and inanimate.[1]

Brahmins though well versed in the Vedas and well versed in lores are like cāṇḍālas if they are not devoted to Kṛṣṇa.[2] All religious activity of a Brahmin is in vain if he is not devoted to Kṛṣṇa.[3]

Arjuna calls Kṛṣṇa the soul of the universe and the lord of everything.[4] Uttaṅka addresses a hymn of 10 lines to Kṛṣṇa in addition to the short one in the Text.[5]

Kṛṣṇa is Viṣṇu and everything in sacrifice. Sacrificers worship him with offerings, the brave with their valour, the learned with their discourses, even the liberated ones who are beyond temptation worship him. In the case of Brahmins who know Kṛṣṇa truly, all sacrifices are as good as offered.[6]

How could then the curse of Durvāsas and other sages take effect against the race that was under the protection of the Almighty ?

Kṛṣṇa did not want that the order of the universe should be violated. The curses of sages must not be in vain. This is why he did not interfere between the quarrels of the Yādavas. In fact he was only waiting for an excuse.[7] Then there was the curse of Gāndhārī too.[8] For the same reason he did not desire to revive his kinsmen as he had done in the case of Parīkṣit.[9]

Gods, sages and Gandharvas address a hymn to Kṛṣṇa while he is entering heaven after giving up his mortal coil.[10] The ocean orders citizens of Dvārakā to abandon their valuables because in the Kṛta Age, Kṛṣṇa is to reincarnate himself once again in Dvārakā itself and as the treasurer of Kṛṣṇa the ocean has to preserve the valuables.[11]

[1] XIII.
[2] XIV 4†TGM2-4 LL 3354-5.
[3] ibid LL 3356.57.
[4] XIV 93* TGM4 (Inf. lin. sec. m.).
[5] XIV 111*TGM3.4.
[6] XV 87*M3.
[7] XVI 26* Dn D2. 5.6-9T G1-3.5. M.
[8] XI 25.41.
[9] XVI 36* KB1-5D (except D5.6) T2.3.
[10] XVI 1†TG1-3.5 MD5.6.
[11] XVI 42* K3.5.

CHAPTER FOUR

OTHER LEGENDS AND EPISODES

THE *Mahābhārata* is intended to be a Golden Treasury of Brahmanic lore and hence a collection of ancient legends and myths, of bird and beast fables, has an important place in its scheme. This aspect is as much important as the main theme of the Epic, the Kaurava Pāṇḍava story—and many of these legends like those of Nala and Damayantī, and Satyavān and Sāvitrī have equal hold over the Indian mind. Various redactors had been busy working on them and many additions have been made in this field also.

In the very first chapter of the first book we have the Brahman Episode inserted by some copies of Devanāgari Composite, Telugu, Grantha and Kashmiri Versions.[1]

After having composed the *Mahābhārata*, Vyāsa was considering how best he should teach it to his pupils. Then God Brahman appeared before him. Vyāsa described the excellence of the poem to the God, who in his turn congratulated the poet on his performance and blessing the work that it would be a sourcebook for all great poets, disappeared.

One finds a similar incident at the beginning of the *Rāmāyaṇa* where God Brahman himself compliments poet Vālmīki on his excellent performance and blesses that so long as mountains stand and the rivers flow, his composition will be popular in the world.[2] Vyāsa-Brahman episode perhaps was an attempt to secure a similar recognition for the *Mahābhārata* also.

To this is attached the Gaṇeśa Episode in Ratnagarbha's Devanāgari version and Kashmiri version 4.6.[3] God Brahman recommends Gaṇeśa as the amuensis for the poem. He appears and undertakes to take down the poem to Vyāsa's dictation on

[1] I 1†D2-12.14 Dn Dr T1.2.G K5.
[2] *Rāmāyaṇa* I 2. vv 22-37.
[3] Foot note to I 1†pp. 884-5.

condition that his pen should not stop even for a single minute. Vyāsa agrees on a counter stipulation that the God of Learning should not write down a single syllable without understanding it. So the poet composes certain riddles which even the ominiscient Gaṇeśa cannot understand easily. While he pauses to consider them, Vyāsa goes on composing in advance. In this way there are in the poem 8,800 verses not easily intelligible.

Gaṇeśa could have been introduced for two reasons. First he is supposed to be the remover of obstacles, and at least from about the 8th century AD the practice has been to invoke him in the beginning of any undertaking. Taking a step further he has been actively associated with the composition of the *Mahābhārata*. Secondly, Gaṇeśa has come to be accepted as the patron God of Learning. His association with the Epic and the contention that even he could not comprehend 8,800 verses from the Epic easily, is perhaps just a way to emphasize the weighty wisdon of the same.

The Brahman episode seems to have arisen in the South since it is to be found in all the Grantha copies consulted for the *Critical Edition*. It must have travelled to the Northern-most Kashmiri Version through the agency of the Devanāgarī versions since Kashmiri Version is a Devanāgarī version of the Śāradā one.

It is intriguing to find that in Kashmir where Gaṇeśa does not hold any special position, he has been brought into close association with this work in at least two manuscripts hailing from there, and equally intriguing is the fact that the South, where he is especially popular and where he is supposed to have had his origin[1] observes silence about him. It appears that the Gaṇeśa Episode was the contribution of the Devanāgarī region through which it went to the Kashmiri Version.

The spurious character of Gaṇeśa episode is clear also from the fact that the *Mahābhārata* does not contain many unintelligible verses, to say nothing about there being such incomprehensible verses after every ten *ślokas* which would have been the case if the story about 8,800 hard nuts which Gaṇeśa was required to crack were true.

K4 relates a curious story to explain why Janamejaya puts a question about the history of his ancestors to Vaiśampāyana. When the serpent sacrifice was over, eighteen

[1] *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. VI, p. 176.

priests, slept through fatigue. In order to wake them up King Janamejaya sprinkled water over them, but the priests did not move. Other Brahmins said that the king had killed the priests and thus incurred the sin of Brahmanicide. The horrified king was advised by an aerial voice that wearing a black piece of cloth of eighteen elbow-lengths he should listen to the recitation of the eighteen *Parvans*, making up the Pāṇḍava story.[1]

Listening to recitation of each *Parvan* of the Epic is credited here to absolve a person of one Brahamanicide, a way to stress the importance of the Epic.

The above stories are clearly meant to emphasize the importance of the Epic. Besides these, there are a number of stories, legends and myths that can be classified as i) Mythological Stories, ii) Heroic Legends, iii) Brahmanic Myths and Legends, iv) Bird and Beast Fables, v) Moral narratives, and vi) Folktales. By the nature and scope of the present study, we would confine here to only such of these as have been rejected as spurious by the *Critical Edition* as they occur only in some individual Recensions, Versions or Manuscripts. A systematic study of all such legends, myths and tales found in the *Mahābhārata* as a whole is not intended here.

I. MYTHOLOGICAL STORIES

Stories in this class glorify some deity especially Śiva or Viṣṇu or their devotees or highlight the importance of some holy place.

(i) Śiva and the Poison

Southern Recension (except Malayali 1) inserts the poison episode which brings Śiva into prominence. The ocean is being churned for the sake of nectar, serpent Vāsuki being used as a churning rope. From his mouth comes out the terrible poison Halāhal. God Brahman, being requested by gods and demons for rescue, meditates on Śiva who gulps it down and holds it in his throat which makes it black. Hence his name Nīlakaṇṭha.[2]

K4 also repeats the same incident but adds that Viṣṇu was made black by the terrible poison.[3]

[1] I 31†K4. Incidentally this is the story about Janamejaya's *Brahmahatyā* which, Shri C. V. Vaidya feared, must remain a mystery forever. vide *Mahābhārata : Criticism p.* 168.

[2] I 9†.

[3] I 10†.

In the Constituted Text, we learn that sparks of fire were flying all-round from the mouth of Vāsuki. This also caused great havoc but Indra showered rain and everything cooled down.[1]

Obviously Śaivas had a version of their own and Southern Saivaite redactors introduced it into the text to enhance the greatness of their own favourite god. The Kashmiri Saivites, (Saivism having a strong-hold in Kashmir) wanted to be little the rival god Viṣṇu, so they introduced the version in their own way, while in the original Indra still controlled the situation retaining his old superior position as the king of gods.

(ii) Viṣṇu and Naraka

Naraka, the son of Diti, was killed by Viṣṇu and not Kṛṣṇa. Naraka was practising penance to occupy the position of Indra. Indra got frightened and prayed to Viṣṇu, who deprived Naraka of his life with the touch of his hand and killed him through deceit.[2]

(iii) The Great Boar

Nārāyaṇa (*Ādidevaḥ Purātanaḥ*) was the god of Death in the Kṛta age. Nobody died. So all sorts of animals and human beings multiplied thousand, even ten thousand times. Due to the heavy burden, the earth sank down for a hundred Yojanas. So she approached Viṣṇu and requested him to lighten her burden. Then Viṣṇu became a boar with one tusk and assuming terrific proportions began to lift the earth for a hundred Yojanas. This act caused a great commotion in the universes and even gods were terrified. But God Brahman explained that it was Viṣṇu and told them the place where the Great Boar was.

This story is told only to enhance the importance of a holy place.[3]

II HEROIC LEGENDS

(i) Duḥṣanta and Śakuntalā

Duḥṣanta was so much engrossed with women that he had really forgotten Śakuntalā and her son.[4] In the Epic we find that he did

[1] I 16. vv 15-24.
[2] III 16 † BD (except D1-3).
[3] III 16 † BD (except D1-3).
[4] I 635*D4 (suppl. fol. sec. m) S.

remember them, but was ashamed of confessing his connection with them in public.[1]

(ii) Yayāti, Devayānī and Śarmiṣṭhā

Why Yayāti proved false to Devayānī and carried on an affair with Śarmiṣṭhā is explained as follows:

Once Yayāti made Devayānī drink wine until she became tipsy. Under the influence of liquor she asked the king who he was, that had come disguised as the king and advised him to run away because the king was irascible by nature.

Yayāti then lost his temper and appointing eunuchs, dumb people, etc., to watch over her, he went to Śarmiṣṭhā and began to pass happy time with her.[2] Not learning his lesson from this experience, whenever Yayāti wanted to make love to Śarmiṣṭhā he first made her tipsy.[3] He had already fallen in love with Śarmiṣṭhā at first sight.[4]

In the Constituted Text it is Śarmiṣṭhā who first approaches Yayāti.[5]

(iii) Arjuna of Thousand Arms

Haihaya Arjuna was endowed with thousand arms by Dattātreya, an incarnation of Viṣṇu. He ruled his kingdom in a just and unselfish manner for a hundred thousand years. He had obtained three boons from the god.[6] This mighty king was killed by Paraśurāma, the next incarnation of Viṣṇu himself.[7]

Arjuna, the Haihaya king, had a golden aerial car through the favour of Dattātreya. He oppressed all gods, Yakṣas and sages and other beings. He also attacked Indra while the latter was in company of Śacī.[8]

(iv) Nala and Damayantī

The famous Nala Damayantī episode does not have many variations

[1] I 68.18.
[2] I 810* D4S.
[3] I 811*G2.4-5.
[4] I 778* D3.4 (marg) 5.
[5] I 77.11-13.
[6] II. 21 † S LL 383-425 also XII 106* K5 V 1 BD (except D.7-8).
[7] ibid., LL 431-436.
[8] III 15†K1.2. BDc Dn D3.4.6. G3.

or worthwhile additions except three passages consisting of 95, 86 and 39 lines respectively which describe the rampage of the merchant's camp at night by wild elephants. After this the remaining merchants hold that Damayantī has brought this ill luck to them and decide to kill her. Learning this, Damayantī runs away deep into the forest blaming her stars.[1] In the text this incident is narrated only in 34 lines without anybody blaming Damayantī for their misfortune. There Damayantī goes to the Cedī capital in the company of learned Brahmins that had survived the rampage.[2]

(v) The Story of Rāma

The famous encounter between Rāma, the son of Daśaratha and Bhārgava Rāma, is described in a manner slightly different from the work of Vālmīki. Dāśarathi Rāma was an incarnation of Viṣṇu; Bhārgava Rāma wanted to test Rāma's prowess; so he came to Ayodhyā with the bow with which he had destroyed Kṣatriyas and challenged Dāśarathi Rāma to string it. The latter easily did so. Then Bhārgava Rāma gave him a divine arrow to be fitted to the bow, which feat also Dāśarathi Rāma performed. Then Dāśarathi Rāma scolded Bhārgava Rāma pointing out that he owed his valour only to his maternal grandfather, who was a Kṣatriya. Dāśarathi Rāma also revealed to the latter his cosmic vision. He discharged the arrow against Bhārgava Rāma, who became unconscious. Regaining his consciousness after some time, he departed for the mountain Mahendra and led there a shameful existence. The shades of his forefathers came to him and scolded him for not respecting Viṣṇu in human form. They also advised him to practise penance on the banks of Vadhūsarā, so that he might get his prowess once again.[3]

This story is in bold contrast to the Bhṛgu element discernible elsewhere in the *Mahābhārata*.[4] Bhārgava Rāma is not recognized as an incarnation of Viṣṇu and the famous incident has nothing to do with Rāma's breaking the bow of Śiva.

The story as narrated in this passage does not occur in the Ramopākhyāna (III 258-275) but in quite a different context, viz., while

[1] III 10†K4 D1-3; 11†D5; 12†K2Dn D5.
[2] III 62 vv 6-17.
[3] III 14†K1.2.BD (except D 1-3.5).
[4] SME Vol I pp. 278 ff..

sage Lomaśa is explaining the glory of a holy place where Bhārgava Rāma regained his lost prowess. The accepted Text makes no reference to this incident at all.

Kaikeyī asks a boon that Rāma should be banished to the forest for fourteen years[1] as in the work of Vālmīki. In the Text the banishment appears to be permanent.[2]

When bound by the serpent missile in Laṅkā Rāma thinks of Garuḍa at the suggestion of the Wind God. Garuḍa immediately appears and frees Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa from the serpent missile.[3] In the Text there is no reference to the serpent missile. Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa are grievously wounded and become unconscious. Bhibhīṣaṇa brings them back to consciousness and Sugrīva removes darts from their bodies with the help of some medicine.[4]

Rāvaṇa pierces Lakṣmaṇa through heart. Lakṣmaṇa faints. Rāma begins to lament his fate, but Bibhīṣaṇa consoles Rāma and asking Hanumānt to fetch a medicine, revives Lakṣmaṇa.[5] The Text does not refer to this incident.

Sītā's Fire ordeal[6] is described by Caturbhuja's Devanagari and Devanagari Composite Versions 2 whereas in the Text gods Vāyu, Agni, Varuṇa and Brahman vouchsafe for Sītā's purity.[7] so that Sītā does not have to go through any ordeal at all.

Varuṇa addresses a hymn to Rāma in which he identifies Rāma with Viṣṇu, Brahman and the Highest Ātman.[8] In the Text Rāma is said to be Viṣṇu's incarnation at the instance of God Brahman in one place only.[9] Grantha 1 refers twice to the story of Rāma in the *Mahābhārata* as *Rāmāyaṇa*.[10]

(vi) Sudeva Goes to Heaven

Sudeva, the commander of Ambarīṣa, conquered all the enemies of his master. Three demons attacked Ambarīṣa while he was

[1] III 1246*B3.4. Dc D1.2.
[2] III 261.25d.
[3] III 1288*K4 Dc2 D1.2. 1289*Dc2 D1.2.
[4] III 273. v 506.
[5] III 1290*D1.
[6] III 28†.
[7] III 275 vv 17-28.
[8] III 1303*D1.
[9] III 260.5.
[10] III 1308*1309*.

performing a sacrifice. Ambarīṣa ordered him not to come back unless he defeated the demons.

When Sudeva saw the immense army of the demons he realized that he could not vanquish them. So he sent back the army and worshipping Śiva he offered to cut his own head. Śiva appeared before him and Sudeva explained that he wanted to die because he could not achieve the mission assigned to him. Śiva gave him the chariot and other equipage with which he had himself destroyed Tripura. Sudeva then defeated the three demons but was killed by one of them in a single combat. He went to heaven afterwards and his master saw him occupying a superior position.[1]

(vii) Precedence in Honour

Suhotra and Śibi Auśīnara once met in the way coming from opposite directions. Neither was prepared to give way to the other because both of them considered themselves equal to each other. Nārada intervened and advised them to weigh the matter well. Suhotra then thought of the many meritorious deeds of Śibi and made way for him.[2]

III BRAHMANIC LEGENDS AND MYTHS

This class of stories is concerned with narrating incidents connected with the importance of Brahmanas, sacrifices, etc.

(i) Uttanka's Staff

Indra sends his thunderbolt to enter the staff of Uttaṅka, so that he could dig the earth and follow Takṣaka to the nether world.[3] According to the Text, Uttaṅka simply follows Takṣaka through the hole through which the latter had entered the nether world.[4]

(ii) Śvetaki Satiates the Fire God

The reason why Agni desired to burn the Khāṇḍava forest is given as follows: In the days of yore, a king, Śvetaki by name, was so much

[1] XII 11†D7S.
[2] III 21†K2.4. Dc. Dn D1-4.6. G3.
[3] I 204*N (except K1 Ñ1) T1 G4.5.
[4] I 3.138.

addicted to performing sacrifices that his priests were exhausted and refused to officiate. They advised him to secure God Rudra himself as his priest. The king propitiated the god by hard penance. He agreed to be Śvetaki's priest on condition that the king satisfied Fire incessantly for twelve years by pouring ghee. The king pomised to do accordingly. Rudra then deputed sage Durvāsas to officiate as a priest at Śvetaki's sacrifice. Fire was satiated with twelve years' feeding of ghee. He went to God Brahman who suggested that he should consume the Khāṇḍava forest and the fat of animals in the same would cure him. The animals of the forest, however, put out fire several times. At last God Brahman consoled Fire by saying that Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, would help him in burning the forest.[1]

Two abbreviated versions of the Śvetaki episode are interpolated in I. 118† and 120†. The king is called Śveta[2] and Śvetaketu[3] respectively.

(iii) The Love of the Fire God

God Agni falls in love with the daughter of king Nīla. He refuses to burn, even after being fanned, until the princess with her charming lips blows. At last the king gives her in marriage to the God in the form of a Brahmin.[4]

(iv) The Trial of Śibi

Once Aṣṭaka, Pratardana, Vasumanas, and Śibi were going in a chariot. They met Nārada on the way and invited him. Then one of the kings asked Nārada, "Supposing only four of us were to go to heaven, who will have to get down?" Nārada said, "Aṣṭaka, because once he boasted to me that he had given thousands of cows as gifts." "In case three were to go to heaven?" "In that case Pratardana will have to get down. Once he gave away four horses of his chariot to Brahmins who pressed him for a horse one after another, but later on he regretted that he could give nothing to the Brahmins thenceforth." "If only two have to go?" "Then I shall get down and Śibi will go to heaven. Once a Brahmin ordered him to kill and cook

[1] I 118†N.
[2] I 120†T3 G2-4.
[3] I 121 S_1 Ko.1.4.
[4] II 299* V1 BD300* Dn2 301*VI BD (D6 marg. sec. m.) G3.

his own son for food for the Brahmin. Śibi did so and carrying the dish on his head went in search of the Brahmin who, he found, was setting fire to the royal palace, treasury, armoury, harem, and stables. Without twitching a line on his face, Śibi offered the food to the Brahmin who after much pressing asked Śibi to eat it himself. Not perturbed in the least, Śibi was about to start eating when the Brahmin held his hand and complimented him on his control over anger and boundless generosity towards Brahmins. Śibi's son was also restored to him. The Brahmin then vanished. He was in fact the creator god come to test Śibi. So Śibi is the best of the lot, even better than myself. Śibi had obeyed the Brahmin's commands and stood the ordeal without any desire for anything".[1] The story does not occur in the Text at all.

(v) Rantideva's Cow-sacrifices

The story of Rantideva who killed so many cows in sacrifices that a regular river of blood sprang from their raw hides heaped up, appears to be quite ancient because even in the Constituted Text cows are held in reverence and the very thought of killing cows in a sacrifice would have been too repugnant for the redactors to invent;[2] however this story does not occur anywhere in any form in the Text.

Some cows, capable of assuming any form they pleased, were enjoying themselves in a lake in the form of beautiful women. Some other cows saw them and asked them who they were. The former told them that they had attained the cows' world because of religious merit and the latter also could go to the heavenly cows' world if they could manage to get slaughtered in the thousand year sacrificial session of King Rantideva.

Now these latter cows were the property of a Bhārgava Brahmin named Sumati, who loved them and their calves so much that he did not even drink their milk but subsisted on the flecks of the foam of their milk and consequently got the nickname 'phenapa' i.e., foam-drinker. It was impossible to persuade the foam-drinker to send his beloved cows to the sacrificial session for being slaughtered. The problem was solved by deciding that this foam-drinker should

[1] III 21†K2.4 Dc Dn D1-4.6- D3.

[2] But XII 29.119 contains reference to a hundred and twenty thousand cows (or bulls) being killed in the sacrifice of Rantideva.

be killed and got out of the way. The divine cows carried away with them the foam-drinker's soul to the cows' world and the herd of tawny cows trod and tore his dead body to pieces. So the 'phenapa' went to heaven and the cows were free.

They went to the sacrificial session of Rantideva and prayed to be slaughtered. The king was struck with horror at the idea but being pressed he agreed to the proposal on condition that as soon as even one cow would be bound to the sacrificial post against her wish, the cows would no longer be slaughtered in his sacrifice.

The sacrifice went on; thousands of cows being slaughtered everyday for years together. Heaps of cows' hides like mountains were seen and a big river of fat and blood called Carmaṇvatī began to flow from them.

One day, a cow took leave of her calf in pathetic words, "Come, my child, drink my milk. After I am killed, thou shalt be miserable through hunger. Here come the wicked men with weapons to slaughter me."

King Rantideva heard these words and stopped cow slaughter at his sacrifice. The already slaughtered cows went to the divine world of the cows so also the 'foam-drinker'. Rantideva after death went to heaven and became a friend of Indra.[1]

IV BIRD AND BEAST FABLES

(i) The Jackal and Its Friends

As an instance of the bird and beast Fables the following story narrated by some Northern and Southern Versions may be quoted. It is meant to illustrate how the four expedients of peace, war, division, and bribery are to be employed with reference to proper persons only, though actually we find here only two expedients, viz., division and war.

Five friends, a tiger, a wolf, a mouse, a jackal and an ichneumon wanted to kill an antelope for food. As guided by the jackal, the mouse nibbled its hooves while it was asleep and then unable to run, it fell an easy victim to the tiger. Now the jackal wanted the whole antelope for itself so it took the tiger aside and told him that the mouse was boasting of its feat and is looking down upon the tiger,

1 XIII 9†D10 S Cv.

for it could kill the antelope only with the help of a mouse. The tiger's self-respect being touched, it refused to eat the antelope and went away. The jackal again frightened the mouse by saying that the ichneumon was planning to eat it. The mouse was frightened and ran away. The jackal conveyed to the wolf the information that the tiger was angry with it, so the wolf also vanished. Then the jackal challenged the ichneumon to fight, boasting that it had already vanquished the tiger, the wolf, and the mouse. Naturally, the ichneumon thought better of fighting such a champion and it also went away. In the end the jackal got the whole antelope for itself.[1]

(ii) Uncle Cat

The Northern Version inserts another fable, that of the cat and the mice, in the *Udyogaparvan*. This story is not found in the Southern Recension and appears to be entirely of Northern origin.

Duryodhana, through his messenger Ulūka taunts Yudhiṣṭhira that though posing to be pious and benevolent, the latter in fact does not dread the prospect of destroying the world in a holocaust of war and therefore he is nothing but a holder of the cat-vow.

The fable is then related in order to explain what is meant by the cat-vow. A wicked cat was once pretending to practise penance on the bank of the river Gaṅgā in order to dupe its usual prey, the birds, the mice, etc. In course of time, some mice were taken in and thought it a capital idea to entrust to Uncle Cat the duty of guarding old and infant mice. The cat readily accepted the pleasant duty and started eating mice stealthily so that it became quite hale and hearty in a few days. Noticing that their population was decreasing and the Uncle was getting fat everyday, the mice held a council to investigate the matter, where a shrewd mouse suggested that he would follow the Uncle to the river for bath and if he did not return the mice would know the truth. The cat, not knowing what had transpired in the meeting, ate up the mouse concerned and then the remaining mice, realizing the truth, ran away.

Duryodhana suggests that Yudhiṣṭhira is like the cat in the story.[2]

[1] I 81†K4 ÑV1 BDM3.5-8 TG2.4.5.

[2] V 9†K4 BDn1 Ds D1.3.4. 6-8.10.

V MORAL NARRATIVES

(i) A Chaste Lady

In order to console Draupadī after Kīcaka and Upakīcakas have been killed for trying to molest her, Bhīma tells her the following story of a chaste lady. Once the queen of King Devavrata was abducted by a demon assuming the form of her husband. Taking her to the bank of a lake, the demon assumed his real form and proceeded to have intercourse with her. She did not submit even after a good deal of courting. When the demon wanted to have his desire forcibly, the chaste woman said, "If I have worshipped my husband as a veritable god and pleased the elders in every manner, may my private parts be as hard as stone. They were turned to stone. The demon in wrath cut her head off with his sword. The lady, however, became a friend of Pārvatī by name Jayā. So a chaste lady has to suffer a little pain but she gets abundunt pleasure later on."[1]

(ii) Devotion to Husband or Devotion to God?

A Brahmin had two wives one of whom was devoted to gods and the other to her husband. The two women died simultaneously. The one devoted to her husband went to the holy worlds while the other devoted to gods was sent to inferior ones. While the latter was lamenting her fate, the God of Death explained that she had turned her back to her duty since husband is ordained to be the god of a woman. The God sent her back to the mortal world where she began to serve her husband.[2]

(iii) Śibi and the Hawk

The famous story of Śibi cutting flesh from his body so that the dove may be saved from the hawk and offering his whole body at last is told by some versions only.[3] The Text relates this same story, substituting Śibi by Usīnara.[4]

[1] IV 26†TG2.
[2] XIII 15†D 10S cv LL 4510-4531.
[3] III 21†(sections 67-95) K2.4 B2-4 DcDn D1-4.6.G3.
[4] III 130 and 131.

The same story is told with greater details, more embellishments and with a greater didactic purpose once again.[1]

(iv) Ungratefulness and Human Nature

A sage named Vatsanābha was practising hard penance until an anthill grew on him. Once it rained incessantly for seven days. The top of the anthill, struck by lightning, fell down; but Dharma, taking pity on Vatsanābha assumed the form of a buffalo and stood above the broken anthill shading the sage from the rain. When the rain stopped, the buffalo went away to a little distance. Vatsanābha then came out of the trance and realizing the recent torrential rain began to wonder who had protected him from the same. Then he saw the big buffalo and guessed correctly. At the same time a thought struck the hungry sage that the buffalo was full of meat and could make many meals. At the next moment, he realized his ungratefulness and remembering that the ungrateful go to hell unless they expiate for their sin with death, he decided to put an end to his life by jumping from Meru. Dharma, however, rescued him.[2]

(v) Bahulā, the Truthful Cow

A beautiful story of the cow Bahulā is narrated by Devanagari Composite 4-8 in order to emphasize the importance of observance of truth.

Bahulā was an excellent cow endowed with all desirable qualities. She used to go ahead of her herd and wander fearlessly alone in the neighbouring mountain. There lived a ferocious tiger who seized Bahulā and was about to kill her as his prey, when Bahulā thought of her calf and began to shed tears. The tiger on learning the cause of her tears told her that whether she wept or laughed, she could not escape and that she had better prepare herself to face her destiny without thinking of her child. Bahulā, however, asked the tiger's permission to go and feed the calf just once and in order to assure him that she would not deceive him, she took many oaths, e.g., she would incur the sin for preventing a person from giving gifts to Brahmins or teachers, for a Brahmin performing sacrifice with

[1] XIII 8†V1 B Dn D5-8,10.
[2] XIII 2†D10 S cv.

wealth of others, for a person who after bestowing his daughter on one person, again gives her to another, etc.

The tiger relented and allowed her to go. Bahulā then came to her calf and while feeding it, began to lament. "Feed, O my child, for the last time. Who is going to feed you henceforth? For I go to surrender myself to a tiger." The calf then offered to go with its mother saying, "There is no kinsman like a mother for infants, no other protector, no other resource, no other affection, no other happiness, and no other god here or in heaven like a mother." The cow, however, would not hear of it and gave practical advice which has a poignancy of its own. "My child, listen to the last advice of mummy. Do not be careless while moving in water or in a forest. Do not believe even in your kith and kin. Beware of beasts of prey, of serpents, Mlecchas, and thieves. The kin perceive with smell, so be sure to smell everything everywhere." She then goes to bid farewell to her mother and in a pathetic tone requests her to take care of the calf. She also takes leave of her friends calling each by her name, "O Vipulā, Campakā, Damā, Bhadrā, Surabhī, Mālinī, Vasundharā, Srī, Nandā, Mahānandā, Ghatesravā, please excuse me if I have offended you unknowingly. Guard my child like your own calves and prevent him from going to dangerous spots, or going to another herd of cattle or doing anything untoward."

Bahulā's mother and friends tried to dissuade her from going, saying that in danger to life, there was no sin in breaking one's oaths. When lives could be saved by falsehood, falsehood was truth, and truth falsehood. Bahulā only replied that she could tell falsehood only to save the lives of others, but she could not do so for saving her own life. She gave a lecture on the importance of truth and started on her last journey appealing on her way to the five elements, the presiding deities of the quarters, mountains, stars, and planets, also of trees, to protect her child and somehow reached the fatal spot.

The tiger was astonished to see Bahulā return and congratulated her on her truthful behaviour. He began to repent of his way of life that involved killing of thousands of animals. Bahulā inpressed on him the value of Ahimsā saying that just as in the foot of an elephant, feet of all animals are covered, so in *Ahimsā* all piousness is contained.

The tiger then gave up the ghost my means of *Prāṇāyāmas* and Bahulā returned home delighted and after a long time she went to

the world of cows (Goloka) with all her friends, the cowherds, their wives, the king, his servants, ministers, and subjects.

Apart from the moral lesson, the story is meant to convey, one is impressed by the human element brought in. Bahulā's solicitude for her calf is so touching that the reader is more impressed by the poignancy of the situation and almost forgets the moral lesson about the observance of truth that this story is meant to teach.

The episode also abounds in lengthy descriptions of the city, the cow Bahulā, etc. which are quite poetic and also in religious discourses on various sins and the importance of truth.[1]

VI FOLK TALES

(i) Garuḍa's Feather

From the upper part of Garuḍa's feather were born peacocks, from the middle part snakes with two heads, and from the lower part ichneumons. Therefore these three are antidotes against serpents' poison.[2]

(ii) The Sun's Charioteer

Some Northern and Southern Versions narrate how Aruṇa became the charioteer of the Sun. The sun got angry that Rāhu was eclipsing him and gods for whose sake he had reported Rāhu to Viṣṇu were looking on indifferently. He began to give out intensely scorching heat. Then God Brahman requested Aruṇa, the son of the sage Kaśyapa to dim the sun's heat by placing himself between the sun and the world as a charioteer.[3]

This is obviously a folk tale personifying the Aurora and trying to create a myth round him.

(iii) Garuḍa and the Serpents

The story of Garuḍa and serpents is repeated in XIII in more details. Only points of difference from the tale in I Ch 14-30

[1] XIII 20†XIII 684*D10S gives a very brief summary of the story in five lines.

[2] I 358*K 0.4.

[3] I 14†NV1 BD (except D5; D2 on suppl. fol). K4 (marg.) T1 G1 2.3.5.

will be noted here. Nārada is brought in. He taunts Garuḍa about the slavery of his mother. Kadrū (and not the serpents) imposes the condition of bringing nectar as she thinks this an impossible task to perform. The elephant and the tortoise are the demons Madhu and Kaiṭabha born again. The tortoise comes out of water to attack the elephant who in his turn tries to ward off the tortoise with his trunk and tusks. Kaśyapa advises Garuḍa to catch the tortoise when it comes out of water and the elephant when he is off guard. The Vālakhilyas are not hanging from the tree as in the *Ādiparvan* story but they are simply engaged in a sacrifice along with Vaikhānasas and Vasus below the branch. An angel advises Garuḍa to drop the huge branch on the land of the Kuvindas (weavers) near seashore. When Garuḍa does accordingly 36 countries *(Janapadas)* are destroyed and that region is still called *Śākhāpataga* (The Branch and the Bird).

When Garuḍa saw the burning fire protecting the nectar, he was frightened and approached God Pitāmaha (creator) and asked for a remedy. The God advised him to use butter or water (milk?) in order to extinguish fire. Garuḍa went to a colony of cowherds for securing butter. Garuḍa then defeated the demons guarding nectar and breaking the net round it, took it away. Indra attacked him with his Vajra but it was ineffective against even a feather of Garuḍa. Garuḍa took nectar to Kadrū who released his mother from the bond of slavery. Immediately Garuḍa carried away the nectar saying that Kadrū had imposed the condition of bringing the nectar and not handing it over to her. In the *Ādiparvan* story, Indra carries away the nectar before the serpents have a chance to partake of it.

Garuḍa then returned the nectar to Indra who at the request of sages gave a boon that Garuḍa would be born as Hṛṣīkeśa Keśava in the family of Śūraputra.[1]

[1] XIII IA†D10S Cv Kum Mad.

CHAPTER FIVE

SOCIAL LIFE

(I) VARṆA, DUTIES, PRIVILEGES, AND DISABILITIES

The *Varṇa* system, that has in its later form of caste system become almost a hallmark of orthodox Hinduism, finds itself strongly entrenched in the *Mahābhārata*. Discourses on the duties of the four *Varṇas*, their relations with each other, and their status, vis-a-vis each other are found especially in the *Śānti* and *Anuśāsana Parvans*.[1]

The attitude of the various versions towards the caste system is a mixed one. The division into *Varṇas* is insisted upon and it is maintained that the world will be ruined, if there is only one *Varṇa*.[2] It is also held that the four *Varṇas* are natural *(Svabhāvādeva)* and not based on action.[3] One can change one's caste *(Jāti)* in the next birth by appropriate acts in this one. For stability of the world it cannot be changed in this very existence.[4] In the Epic, Mataṅga's story of his futile attempts to earn Brahminhood[5] also supports this view. Then again there is the story of the insect that after many births was born as a Brahmin.[6]

(a) Brahmin

In the Southern Version, emphasis is laid on birth as well as Vedic scholarship, e.g., "Sons of Śrotriyas, devoid of *Saṅskāras*, though well

[1] Vide XII Ch. 61.

[2] ibid, cv L 456.

[3] ibid, cv L 1518.

[4] XIII 15†D10S Cv LL-1547-48.
"Ksatriyas etc. cannot attain to Brahminhood even with crores of austerities. Viśvāmitra became a Brahmin because his mother had eaten the Brahman rice," says a verse quoted by Vādirāja in his Commentary on XIII 4.59.

[5] XII 28-30.

[6] XIII 118-120.

versed in the Vedas are not worthy of respect. Only Śrotriyas born in pure families are supposed to be learned in the real sense. Vedic scholars not born of fathers in Vedic traditions are an insult to the Vedas even though deeply learned in the same."[1]

However, the idea of solidarity of the whole society is present in the minds of the redactors. It is stated that all components of the society like Brahmins, Vaiśyas, Śūdras, Mlecchas, etc., had gathered in the palace of Yudhiṣṭhira for the sacrifice.[2]

In the *Āraṇayakaparvan* we find Yudhiṣṭhira playing down the importance of *Varṇa* system based on birth and setting more value on qualities.[3] This stand is supported by the Text in the *Anuśāsana Parvan* where Bhīṣma says, "Birth, *Sāmskāra,* Learning, Modesty (*Sannati*) are not constituent causes of Brahminhood (*Dvijatva*) but character is (the true cause). Any one is made a Brahmin because of his character. Whoever possesses character becomes a Brahmin."[4]

The same attitude is reflected in the Southern Recension which declares, "Character makes one a Brahmin and not caste, family, erudition or scholarship. Many sages born in lower castes have gone to the world of Brahman through performance of duty. Study is useless like the training of an actor. Erudition in a man without character is like water in a bag of dog's leather."[5] A Brahmin learned in four Vedas, but possessing no character is worse than a Śūdra.[6]

One who maintains an Agnihotra, is self controlled, content at heart, engaged in penance and Vedic study, steadfast, able to bear conflicting passions, free of attachment, well-wisher of all, friendly, satisfied with whatever food, cloth and residence he gets, afraid of honour as of a nest of serpents or of death, shy of women as of a corpse, him the Gods consider a Brahmin."[7]

One finds many passages in the same strain. "A Brahmin is one who is free of six Vṛṣalas in the form of lust, anger, greed, infatuation, intoxication and delusion, seven Kṣatriyas in the form

[1] XIII 7A†D10 S Cv.
[2] II 29†S.
[3] III 32†Dn D6G3.
[4] XIII 131.47-50.
[5] III 19†K2.4 B1.2.
[6] III 32†Dn D6 G3.
[7] III 19 K†2.4 B1.2 also XII 237.11-14.

of haughtiness, passion, egotism, jealousy, treachery, bitterness and cruelty, eight Vaiśyas in the form of hard-heartedness, baseness, deception, wickedness, hypocrisy, crookedness, villainy, and falsehood, and twentyone Śūdras in the form of greed, rapaciousness, sloth, sleep, mercilessness, lack of compassion, worries, dispute, error, lack of (moral) courage, fear, unsteadiness, stupidity, sin, ferociousness, hope, disbelief, lack of finality lack of self-control, impurity, dirty habits."[1] Also one endowed with forbearance is a Brahmin",[2] "only persons that are tolerant, self-controlled, dispassionate are best Brahmins, the others are Śūdras. Gods consider them as Brahmins who are devoted to Agnihotra, engrossed in Vedic Studies, pure at heart, observing fasts and self-controlled. Caste is not respected, qualities lead to Bliss. Even a Cāṇḍāla whose behaviour is blameless is considered a Brahmin by good.[3]

Ideas associated with Kṛṣṇaism also play a part. "A man is a Brahmin at the moment he concentrates on Kṛṣṇa; on other occasions he is something else".[4]

One redactor seems to be insisting on some positiv aqualities in addition to the birth. "The characteristics of Brahmins are sacrifice, learning, kindness, non-violence, hospitality, self-control, truth, austerities and gifts".[5]

As against this, attempts are made to raise the Brahmins to the status of gods or even above. Cf., "Sacrifices depend upon Vedas, gods on sacrifice and also on Brahmins, therefore Brahmins are gods".[6] "Dharma is all powerful but a Brahmin is even greater than Dharma".[7]

Brahmins are so important that but for them the earth and heaven would not be sustained.[8] The remaining *Varṇas* are supposed to be under control of the Brahmins.[9] Naturally they must be well looked after.

[1] XIV 4†TGM2-4 LL 1694-1705.
[2] XIV 4†TGM2-4 LL 1719.
[3] XIV 4†5 TGM2-4 LL 3223-28.
[4] XIV 4†TGM 2-4 LL 1708-09.
[5] XII 191* D7 S.
[6] XIII 4†TGM2-4.
[7] I 1102*Dn3.
[8] XIII 15†D10S LL 465-66.
[9] V 81.62 cd.

Feeding a Brahmin is better than offering oblations in an Agnihotra. Merit of such a feeding never comes to an end.[1] Fire does not accept anything from a house where Brahmins are not fed.[2] The text also declares that by feeding ten thousand Brahmins a confirmed sinner is absolved.[3]

"To feed a Brahmin is better than even to maintain Agnihotra."[4] If Brahmins and cows eat in the house of an Anaryan forcibly, he gets more religious merit than that from a horse sacrifice."[5] An attempt is made to raise the Brahmins even above Lord Sri Kṛṣṇa Himself. "Kṛṣṇa is not pleased even if one worships Him elaborately, recites Rk, Yajus and Sāman formulae in His honour but does not please the Brahmins. Brahmins with bodily defects, penniless or diseased should not be insulted for they are His forms. Even He owes His status to favour of Brahmins."[6] Some voluptuous redactors have tried to induce the believers to give away their beautiful daughters to Brahmins. "One giving a beautiful daughter to a Brahmin gets the merit of giving away a thousand strong bullocks or a hundred thousand cows. The donor is honoured in the world of Viṣṇu for as many years as the girl has hair. Coming down from there he is born as a Brahmin well versed in four Vedas, six Vedaṅgas, and respected of the whole world."[7] Not satisfied with this, a further claim is made on behalf of Brahmins, "Whatever auspicious and covetable thing exists on the face of the earth, including wealth, food grains, gold, women, vehicles, all belongs to Brahmins."[8] A Brahmin conversant with the *Atharvaveda* is supposed to dispel the defects in a line of people sitting down for a meal.[9]

A Brahmin's property enjoys utmost security. Snatching away a Brahmin's property is the most heinous sin. "Those doing so along with their descendants come to ruin and become Cāṇḍālas after death, nay, in this very existence."[10]

[1] XIII 1†D10 S cv. also Manu VII 84.
[2] XIII 7†D10 S cv.
[3] XIII 113.12.
[4] XIII 1†D10S cv.
[5] XIV 4††TG M2-4.
[6] XIII I† D10 S cv.
[7] XIV 4††TGM2-4 LL 1126-1136.
[8] XII 180*D7S.
[9] XIII 413*D4-9 23.
[10] XIII 464*S cf VIII 104.5-11.

One who snatches away a Brahmin's property suffers tortures in hell, becomes a worm in nightsoil and subsists on droppings of a dog.[1]

This belief is countenanced by the Text also. A strict Brahmacārin is said to have been born a Cāṇḍāla because he got as alms food that was covered with dust raised by a Brahmin's cows being carried away.[2]

Even the king has to act with restraint while dealing with Brahmins. Brahmins should not be punished even for grave offences, the king should only get angry with them at times.[3] A king should especially honour a Brahmin.[4] The royal chaplain is the master of the king and everybody else.[5]

A king should appoint ministers of all the *Varṇas*. They should be expert in administration, but even among them Brahmin ministers should be consulted first, then the Kṣatriya and then Vaiśya and Śūdra.[6]

"However unworthy, Brahmins should be honoured. Even those Brahmins who are innocent of the Vedas and have never observed any vow, even Brahmins in name, should be worshipped. What to say then of the Brahmins who worship both the *Sandhyās*".[7] Members of any *Varṇa* who behaves atrociously with Brahmins should be punished by pulling their eyes out.[8] A king should put to death any member of any *Varṇa* if he is a Brahminicide or a thief. A king should cut the hands, feet, nose and lips of a Brahminicide if he belongs to the Kṣatriya or Vaiśya or Śūdra *Varṇa*. He should banish a Brahmin who refuses to undergo expiation but kill with weapon members of the other three *Varṇas*.[9] Murder of a Brahmin was such a heinous crime that Brahminicides were forced to stay with Cāṇḍālas and persons eating with them also were looked upon as Brahminicides. No funeral rites were

[1] XIII 468*S (except M.)

[2] XIII 104. 9-10.

[3] XIII 15†D 10S cv LL 1309 and 1317.

[4] XII 183*K1 (marg. sec. m) Ś V1B (except B1) Da Dn D2.3.5.6.

[5] XII 184*D7 S.

[6] XII 158* D7 S.

[7] XIV 4†TGM2-4 LL 502-504.

[8] XII 3†D7S LL 55-56.

[9] ibid, LL 45, 46.

offered for a Brahminicide.[1] A Brahminicide should of his free will make himself a target for learned people wielding weapons, or throw himself into burning fire thrice (?) with head hanging downwards, or walk a hundred *Yojanas* repeating one of the Vedas, or give away his everything to a Brahmin well versed in the Vedas or give him wealth enough to sustain him for life or a house with all subsidiaries. A Brahmin murderer can also be free of his sin by protecting a cow or a Brahmin"[2] (at the cost of his own life).

Some restrictions are also imposed on a Brahmin. "A Brahmin putting on sandals is a sinner."[3] "A Brahmin loses his Brahminhood if he takes bath in a well for twelve years or maintains himself by government service only (*rājāśrayeṇaiva*) for twelve years or stays in a city or a town for an equal period or raises a son on a Śūdra woman through lust or kisses a sunkan woman or eats Soma creeper without any sacrificial occasion or performs the sex act by tongue or (Malayali 2 adds) stays alone in a village of Śūdras even though he performs rites prescribed in the *Gṛhya Sūtras*."[4] Brahmin-following other than learned professions were supposed to be similar to the *Varṇas* concerned, by the Text also.[5] A Brahmin was supposed to be so much scrupulous that the act of picking up a fruit from the ground, the sanctity of which was not ascertained, was considered enough to degrade him in the eyes of even his younger brother. Nor should a Brahmin eat his food and relish it.[6] "A Brahmin who has never partaken of Śūdra's food is considered to be the most deserving even superior to an *Āhitāgni* or an *Agnihotrin*."[7]

Abundance of wealth is a calamity for a Brahmin, for it would infatuate and make him proud. Then Dharma will come to an end and in consequence the creation will also be destroyed.[8] Brahmins were not supposed to be afraid of cold nor Kṣatriyas of wars.[9] A Brahmin having intercourse with a Śūdra woman is taken to be a

[1] ibid., L 50.

[2] XII 48†K6V1 BD (except D1-4-7-)-(var) Manu XI 73, 75 ab 76ab, 79 cd.

[3] XIV 4†TGM2-4 LL 2791-92.

[4] XIV 4†TGM2-4 LL 3290-3303.

[5] XII 77.

[6] I 79*K4 D4.5 (all supp. fol. sec. m.) S also I 155.15 & 18.

[7] XIV 4†TGM2-4 LL 1190 and 2259.

[8] XIII 337*N. LL 2-5.

[9] VII 367*DS.

grave sinner.[1] A Brahmin must not sell liquids and corn or accept food from a Śūdra except in calamities and must not keep a Vṛṣala woman.[2] If a Brahmin, unfit to be invited for meals, eats any offerings made to gods, it goes to the demons.[3] The Epic also says that the king should force such Brahmins as do not perform *Sandhyā* to work as Śūdras.[4] Those who make friends with a bad Brahmin are sinners.[5]

With all the reverence Brahmins are held in, it is realized that they are not capable of administering a kingdom. When Kaśyapa handed over the earth to the Brahmins, there was anarchy. Brahmins became drunkards, foolish, and conceited. All the four *Varṇas* began to go astray and to destroy each other with each other's help. Brahmins became heterodox and everybody began to commit theft, tell lies and practise fraud. The wicked lost all fear and started killing Brahmins, Vaiśyas, and Śūdras who were still treading the right path and also ascetics in their hermitages devoted to sacrifices and Vedic studies and old cowherdesses. Nobody studied logic, scriptures or any profession. There was no administration worth the name. All the three higher *Varṇas* gave up *Saṁskāras* and became Mlecchas in this topsyturvydom.[6]

It is also admitted that Brahmins are brave only in words, Kṣatriyas in deeds.[7] Even a Brahmin should be killed if he swerves from duty or is a desperado. A Kṣatriya should fight with a Brahmin who is a thief, cruel or swerves from duty. In a battlefield one must kill a desperado even if he is a thorough Vedic scholar.[8]

(b) Kṣatriya

A Kṣatriya also holds an important position in the social structure, for in the absence of Kṣatriya, there would be chaos on the earth."[9]

[1] XIII 435*T3.
[2] XIII 15†D10S.
[3] XIII 409*V1 BDn D5.
[4] XIII 107.19.
[5] XII 433*D4.
[6] XII 111*D7S.
[7] IV 42†D7.
[8] XII 3†D7S LL 24-25.
[9] XIII 395*S.

A Kṣatriya has a covetable position in life, for a Brahmin woman gives birth only to a student who becomes a beggar later on, a cow, to a bearer of burdens, a mare to a fast runner, a Śūdra woman to a servant and Vaiśya lady to a labourer but a Kṣatriya lady to a brave warrior.[1]

Some conscientious people appear to have disapproved of the Kṣatriya calling. Yudhiṣṭhira says to Kṛṣṇa, "Bṛhaspati has truly said to gods 'Sons and fathers would kill each other for getting a kingdom.' This is the eternal duty of Kṣatriyas."[2]

Others are proud of a Kṣatriya's duty to kill the enemy or to get killed himself. "The killer and the killed in the battle are both honoured in heaven. A person dying in the interest of his nation, for the sake of cows or Brahmins, for capturing (an enemy) or for a friend is equal to a person giving the whole earth or the desire yielding cow to Brahmins. He is better than a person performing a thousand sacrifices."[3]

A Kṣatriya is supposed to be relentless, even unscrupulous. That is his duty. "A Kṣatriya who refrains from killing his own father or teacher bent on killing himself does not deserve the name of a Kṣatriya. God Brahman himself has said that a Kṣatriya should kill his enemy in any manner straightforward or crooked. Only he deserves to be called a Kṣatriya who kills his enemy, whether the father or the teacher."[4]

But some redactors want a Kṣatriya to be fair even in war. They maintain that Yudhiṣṭhira's infamy for having cheated Droṇa will remain in the universe eternally like that of Rāma for having killed Vālin.[5]

The Kṣatriya that kills in battle a person who does not recognize the ancient bridge of Dharma, knows his duty and also he who covers the earth in battle with grass in the form of blood, mountains in the form of elephants and trees in form of banners.[6]

In the Text, emphasis is laid on the fact that death on the battle-field is a coveted thing for Kṣatriyas. Abhimanyu has gone to heaven

[1] VII 395*S.

[2] VI 425*D1.

[3] XIII 15†D10S.

[4] VII 1385*TG2-4.

[5] VII 1375*K4 BDc1 Dn1 D1.3.5.

[6] XII 121*N (except ŚlK1D8).

that can be attained only by meritorious deeds. It is not a thing to lament about.[1] A mortal has to die sometimes even at home but death while fighting is (laid down by) ancient (scriptures).[2] Kṣatriyas can have nothing better than on apportunity to fight. They cannot by any other means attain heaven to the extent to which they can attain by death in a battle.[3] A Kṣatriya does not attain to the higher worlds by penance but by war, whether he is victorious or defeated.[4]

If one leaves one's companions in the battlefield and goes home in safety, one falls in the *Raurava* Hell which cannot be crossed.[5] Karṇa tells Bhīṣma that death through disease was sinful for a Kṣatriya.[6]

One does not become a Kṣatriya by birth. Even a person outside the pale of the four *Varṇas* is a Kṣatriya if he protects people from dangers.[7]

In keeping with this spirit, Dhṛṣṭadyumna declares in Versions Telugu 1 Grantha 3.4 at the time of Draupadī's Svayaṁvara that any man belonging to any of the four *Varṇas* can win Draupadī for his wife if he can string the bow (and shoot the mark),[8] meaning thereby that a person possessing that much skill will be considered a Kṣatriya so far as the marriage is concerned.

(c) Vaiśya

But for the Vaiśyas other (Varṇas) would not exist.[9] The Vaiśyas came out of the belly of God Brahman (In the Veda they come out of the thighs of the Puruṣa).[10] Vaiśyas must not sell sesamum, fragrant articles, and liquids.[11] Only the rich among the Vaiśyas deserve respect.[12]

[1] VII 50.62-67.
[2] IX 111*D9 TG.
[3] XI 1†ŚKÑ1 BDn D1-6.8.9. Cd.
[4] III 126*K2B Dc2 D5-6.
[5] II 300*S.
[6] VI 511*T1G1 2-4 also 509*K4 BDa.
[7] XII 8†D7S.
[8] I 1845*T1G3.4.
[9] XIII 15*D 10S L 509.
[10] XIII 15†D 10S L 515.
[11] ibid.
[12] II 357*K4V1 BD.

(d) Śūdra

The Śūdra has been relegated to a pitiable position. All conceivable vices take hold of him as soon as he is born. He gets free from them by devotion to Brahmins,[1] though some other redactors would grant that the three higher *Varṇas* depend on Śūdras the reason being that there will be nobody to do (manual) work, if there are no Śūdras.[2] The fourteen Vidyās should not be taught to a Śūdra. Three things are unholy, viz., a dog, a Śūdra, and an eater of dog's meat. Five things are impure, viz., a Brahmin who subsists upon the offerings made to an idol, a cock, a sacrificial post (Yūpa?), and husband of a Vṛṣala woman."[3]

"A Śūdra is even forbidden to drink milk of a brown cow, by which he becomes a heinous sinner and his ancestors are condemned to partake of unholy things on the earth like dogs and jackals, the Śūdra is himself tortured in hell for a hundred crores of years and after that period he becomes a worm in nightsoil birth after birth and never comes out of that existence. Even a Brahmin accepting gifts of such a Śūdra incurs terrible sin, so that he becomes an outcaste and has to undergo a number of expiatory rites."[4] Kṛṣṇa accepts worship from a Śūdra only if he offers it through a Brahmin.[5] Nor should he take the name of Kṛṣṇa with the sacred syllable *Om* prefixed and worship Kṛṣṇa. There is no other expiation for him.[6] Kṛṣṇa does not accept worship from a Śūdra who is not a devotee and who is not observing any vow.[7]

Even Kṛṣṇa does not know what will become of a Brahmin that eats off a Śūdra, though such a Brahmin is engaged in Vedic studies, and repeats the sacred *Mantras*.[8]

In the case of the higher *Varṇas* the marriage is by ritual but in the case of Śūdras it is legalized by union.[9]

[1] XIV 4†TGM2-4 LL 3340-49.
[2] XIII 15†D10S L 520.
[3] XIV 4†TGM 2-4 LL 3249-52.
[4] XIII 15†D10S L52.
[5] XIV 4†TGM2-4 LL 3264-65.
[6] ibid., LL 3334-39.
[7] ibid., LL 3380-81.
[8] ibid.
[9] ibid., LL 4494-95.

Vṛddha Parāśara lays down a very strict, pious and virtuous life for Śūdras, "They are supposed to conquer the six internal foes (i.e. the passions) with a trained and subdued mind and wait upon the three higher *Varṇas*, despising the Rākṣasas and the Yakṣas (tribal deities?). No Śūdra should perform penance in the manner prescribed in the Vedas. It is impious and infamous for them to do so. A Śūdra cannot earn religious merit in any other way than the one specially prescribed for him by the scriptures."[1] Śūdras get the highest heaven by serving the Brahmins.[2]

A redeeming feature is provided only by Bhagavataism. Devotees of Kṛṣṇa though Śūdra or Cāṇḍālas must not be insulted. One who insults them goes to hell.[3] "Even if a Śūdra offers a leaf, a flower, a fruit or water to Kṛṣṇa, He holds it on His head."[4]

It appears that in the opinion of Bengali redactors Śūdras were also allowed to observe all religious rites.[5]

A liberal vein is noticeable in a Southern redactor, "God Brahman has himself said that even a Śūdra who has purified himself by good acts and self-control should be waited upon (i.e. respected) like a Brahmin. If an auspicious behaviour is found in a Śūdra, he is pure and should be considered a Dvija; that is what I (Śiva) think.[6] Age should be respected in the case of Śūdras.[7]

A Śūdra avoiding Śūdra's duties (?) observing truthful and straightforward behaviour, generous, honouring the *Mantras* and Brahmin, after death goes to heaven and thence is born as a Brahmin.[8]

(e) Cāṇḍālas

The Epic holds that a Cāṇḍāla can be freed from his despicable birth only if he offers his body to beasts of prey or dies in a battle for Brahmins.[9] But the Southern Recension is more humanitarian.

[1] XIII 10†D10S cv.
[2] III 745*S.
[3] XIV 4†TGM2-4 LL 3254-57.
[4] ibid., LL 3262-63, 3350-51.
[5] XIII 692*V1 BDn D1.2.4-9.
[6] XIII 15†D10 S.
[7] II 357* K4V1BD.
[8] XIII 15†D10S cv LL 1538-44.
[9] XIII 104-26-28.

It exhorts one not to blame the Cāṇḍālas too much nor should one get angry with them; they are after all suffering the effects of their own acts in the previous births.[1]

Even a Cāṇḍāla or an eater of dog's meat, should be offered food in order to safeguard future life when he comes to a householder at food time.[2] The Epic speaks of a Śūdra with abundant wealth.[3]

(f) Higher Prospects in the Varṇa Hierarchy

High prospects are held before pious and virtuous members of the four *Varṇas* but their prospects can be bright only in proportion to the *Varṇa*, "Brahmins leading a pious and virtuous life go to Brahmaloka after death and pass their time joyously till the universal destruction. Kṣatriyas leading a dutiful life go to heaven after death and sporting there for thirty cycles of four yugas like gods, are born as Brahmins well versed in four Vedas. A Vaiśya engaged in fruitful and productive activities goes to heaven after death and sporting there for forty-five cycles of four *Yugas* is born as a Kṣatriya in this world. Similarly a Śūdra devoted to service of the three higher *Varṇas* and especially to that of Brahmins attains heaven after death and having sported there for a crore of years is born as a prosperous Vaiśya."[4]

Prospects of attaining a higher *Varṇa* are not confined to the next birth alone. Some redactors are radical enough to throw open doors to higher social status in this very birth to anyone who possesses qualities that can be cultivated with efforts. "A man or woman of low caste raise their status by observing *Ahiṁsā* and maintaining high character. In the opinion of Bṛahaspati, gods consider even a Cāṇḍāla as a Brahmin if he has a high character. Even if he kills a sinner, he does not become a killer. One who kills ferocious animals like leopards, tigers, lions, sarbhas, elephants, buffalos, boars, etc. for protecting cows and Brahmins, women and children, knows the Dharma. Between a sinning Brahmin and Mleccha of pure deeds, the Mleccha is superior."[5]

[1] XIII 15†D10S cv LL 2063-64.

[2] XIV 4†TGM2-4 L-2276.

[3] XIII 118.18.

[4] XIV 4†TGM2-4 LL 176-211.

[5] XII 12†D7S (G3 missing).

Even Śūdras giving protection to people in miserable conditions deserve honour. One who protects the good and punishes the wicked should be made a king because he sustains the world."[1]

(II) ĀŚRAMAS

Not much information is found about the *Āśramas* except:

(i) A householder should prefer not to undertake any journey,[2] and

(ii) A sage *(Sannāyasin)* should eat only eight morsels, a forest dweller *(Vānaprastha)* only 16, a family holder only 32, but there is no limit to the quantity of food that a *Brahmacārin* (a student) may eat.[3]

(III) POSITION OF WOMAN

(i) Woman in General

The status of women in the epic as a whole is pitiable though one finds women like Satyavatī, Kuntī, Gāndhārī, Draupadī, holding influence in their family circles, women like Sulabhā with scholarly pursuits, those like Sāvitrī changing destinies of their husbands; there are found on the other hand, women like Ambikā and Ambālikā, the wives of Vicitravīrya, Sudeṣṇā, Madayantikā, who are so much devoid of any freedom that they have to submit to the embrace of a man imposed upon them by others including their husbands, whether they like it or not.

In the additional passages also we find this same mixed attitude towards woman. A very ungenerous and unfair view is taken of women's morality in XIII 38.26 and I 11 89* Southern Recension and Devanagari Composite 2.4.5. XIII 288* Devanagari Composite 8, etc.

The Southern Recension goes to the length of declaring that even if a man has one thousand tongues, he lives for a hundred years and does nothing but describe the faults of women, he will die without finishing his job.[4]

[1] ibid.

[2] XIII 15†D10S L 1539.

[3] I 862*D4 (marg.) S.

[4] XIII 289*S.

A woman is baseness incarnate. She is guarded by sweet words and (the husband) not going on a journey. A woman should be approached on the unprohibited nights; there should be no rigid rule in this matter; at the same time there should not be total absence of restraint.[1] She has no independent existence for its own sake. Creator created women for the sake of sons and for the pleasure of the husband. A woman without a husband and a child has lived in vain. She cannot hope for a place in heaven.[2] "Women and jewels are common property," says Jayadratha to Draupadī.[3] In the Text also, it is held that one giving away women among other things is born in heaven after death,[4] also cf., Draupada[5] and Kṛṣṇa[6] giving beautiful women as marriage gifts to Pāṇḍavas.

"A woman is to have one husband, a man many wives. This is the Dharma ordained by Pitṛs. A woman may have a second husband through *Niyoga* for progeny in case of difficulty. A woman having a third one has to undergo expiation, if she has a fourth one she becomes an outcaste and one having a fifth one is a harlot[7].

(ii) Wife

A wife is supposed to be almost a slave of her husband. She should devote herself to his service placing him higher than the gods.[8]

She is even supposed to love any woman to whom her husband takes fancy.[9] When the husband is pleased, all deities are pleased with a woman.[10] Let a woman with whom the husband is not pleased, be reduced to ashes like a creeper burnt in conflagration.[11] An ideal wife does not eat or take bath or sleep or approach for pleasure unless her husband has done so. She is delighted when the husband is delighted, miserable when he is so, desolate when

[1] XIII 203*D10 TG1 2.4 M1.3.
[2] I 804*S.
[3] III 1202*TG 1.2.4.
[4] XIII 133.4d.
[5] I 1902* K D4 5 (marg. sec. m.)
[6] I 1937*T3G2-4.
[7] I 100†S D4. supp. fol. (Sec. M) K4.
[8] XIII 15†D10 Scv.
[9] Ibid., LL 4500-4604.
[10] XII 371*K5 Da2 Dn3 D2.3.8.
[11] XII 372*K5V1 BDa Dn1 D2.3.5.8.

he goes on a journey and conciliatory when he gets angry. (The dove says this about his mate).[1] An ideal wife is expected to keep the fire burning, cleanse the house and also keep utensils, foodgrains, house, furniture, etc. tidy, take care of money, look after sons and daughters and bring them up well, take care of herself during pregnancy, avoid waste of food and take care of cattle and food-grains like valuables and give alms to Brahmins. She is not to wake up a husband sleeping comfortably or when ill.[2]

The importance of the wife is also recognized. Śakuntalā tells Duḥṣanta that when husband and wife are carrying on smoothly, then only pleasure, prosperity, and piety are possible. Without the help of wives men cannot perform the worship of gods, entertain guests or look after servants. Wealth, however earned, is ruined if there is no wife or if there is a bad wife.[3] If a man does not have a wife, chaste and agreeable, he had better go to the forest, for his home is like a forest.[4] But one would not love a bad wife.[5] A house, though full of sons, grandsons, and daughters-in-law, is desolate for a householder without a wife. A wife is the house in fact. A house without a wife is worse than a forest.[6] Living beneath trees is like living at home if the wife is there, but without her even a palace is certainly a forest. A wife is a man's companion in the matters of piety, wealth, and pleasure. She is his trusted friend if he wants to go abroad.[7]

If a person's wife is always loving him and keeping his whims satisfied even in adversity, surely his heaven is here on this earth. A wife should be attentive to her house, devoted to husband, always speaking agreeably, and always attractive. A wife who appreciates her husband's qualities and cooperate with him, delightfully, is real wealth, while wealth is not really so.[8]

(iii) Molested Women

Right from the hoary past, women molested by strangers (i.e. persons

[1] XII 365*K3.5 V1 BDa Dn.1.3. D2-5.8.
[2] XIII 617*D10S 618*D10 T2 G.
[3] I 49†Da1.
[4] XII 368*K2.5 V1 BDa Dn1.3. D2.5.8.
[5] XII 433*D4.
[6] XII 364*K3.5. V1B.
[7] XII 366*K3.5 V1 BDa Dn1.3. D2-5.8.
[8] XII 367*K3 D4.

other than the husband) have been looked upon as impure and unworthy to continue as wives or even to hold a place in the family. They are just abandoned even on suspicion, as Rāma did in the case of Sītā. However, Vāśiṣṭha Dharmasūtra lays down that women (among other things) are not lost by being enjoyed by others. (XVI 18).

The Epic takes a clear stand on this point. The only case in the *Mahābhārata* where a woman is abandoned because somebody else carried her away, though against her will, is that of Ambā. The behaviour of Śālva in this context is referred to with disapproval by the Text.[1]

The Southern Recension of the *Mahābhārata* says that the monthly course of a woman purifies her every month.[2] The ancestors of Jaratkāru tell him that persons abandoning their wives wander on the earth hungry and bereft of piety, prosperity and pleasure, they go about begging and dressed in tattered clothes.[3] Apart from the physical discomfort, "such a person also incurs sin beyond expiation." "Women should be deserted under no circumstances, because they are the foundation of sons and grandsons."[4] Women appear to have been valuable for this reason; for the heavens that fathers of sons get, are not available even by hundreds of sacrifices or by various austerities.[5] Also "women should not be abused nor killed nor harassed if a man wishes well to himself for they give delight and satisfaction to man and moreover they are the foundations of the bridge in the form of a son."[6]

"A husband incurs the sin of killing the foetus if he abandons a woman with or without reason and leaves her unprotected. Even if a woman resorts to a stranger for the sake of an issue, she has to be maintained. Even if she is only lascivious, she is not to be abandoned. Women and rivers are alike. They do not become impure by contact with men. Rivers are purified by the flow and women by menstruation."[7] Liberal attitude is shown to an

[1] V 172.
[2] I 673*S (except G3).
[3] I 27†Ko.4 Dal.
[4] XIII 7A†D10.
[5] I 27†Ko.4 Dal.
[6] XIII 7A†D10 Scv.
[7] XIII 17A†D10S.cv.

adulteress and the blame for the crime is laid at the door of the male concerned. "In case of adultery, man is a greater criminal. This is a boon granted to them by Viṣṇu. Unless they are pregnant they should not be abandoned even if they commit adultery with man of the same *Varṇa*."[1] It is not stated what is to be done with a woman who commits adultery with a man of a lower or a higher *Varṇa*.

The same authority modifies this liberal stand later on and goes on to say, "Husband and wife can separate from each other without incurring sin if they have the goal of liberation (*Mokṣa*). A husband can also abandon a wife who is attached (to someone else) apart from adultery committed only once, whose children die, who commits adultery with a Śūdra, even an adulteress in general (a confirmed adulteress ?). But the husband must first make sure about his wife's guilt."[2] A husband also can abandon a wife who is free of the husband (self-willed), acts as she pleases, who is sterile or gives birth only to daughters or whose children die young.[3]

The lawgiver once again waxes liberal and treats an unmarried girl leniently. "A girl in whose case only the marriage ceremony was performed (but the marriage has not been consummated) can marry again after her husband dies. She is called a *Punarbhū* but is not disqualified otherwise in any respect.[4]

Even a deeper vein of liberalism is found in the following. "A girl who has conceived or delivered (before marriage) can expiate for her sin by undergoing three-fourths of the purificatory rite for a Brahmanicide; the remaining one-fourth is supposed to have been performed after the childbirth."[5] The idea appears to be that there should be no abortion attempted, killing a foetus being considered as a heinous sin. Sons of such a mother born before wedlock (*Kānina* sons) were fully authorised to make offerings to gods and manes.

A woman not legally married also occupied the status of a wife; she was called a *Kumāri Bhāryā* but her sons did not enjoy any privileges.[6]

[1] ibid., LL 212-215.
[2] XIII 7A†D10S cv.
[3] ibid.
[4] ibid.
[5] ibid.
[6] ibid.

(iv) Suttee

References to the custom of Suttee are rare.

A wife that follows her husband (in death) lives in heaven for three and half crores (of years), i.e., as many years as a man has hair. Just as a serpent catcher drags a serpent from its hole, so also such a woman takes out her husband (from hell) and enjoys pleasures with him.[1] Even for a chaste woman, devoted to her husband, self immolation on her husband's pyre was not obligatory. She had the option to lead a pious life.[2]

(v) Mother

Woman as mother appears to be highly respected and held in greater reverence than the father or even the Brahmin teacher. When Matsyagandhā touches her own son Vyāsa, who becomes a boy of seven years immediately after birth, he scolds her saying that she was after all a fisherman's daughter, though sanctified by the touch of the sage Parāśara, his father. Parāśara, however, rebukes him, saying that parents should never be looked down upon. Between them the mother is superior.[3]

(IV) SON AND DAUGHTER

Sons were considered in ancient India as the highest treasure a man could possess. In the Smṛti literature the maxim of the field and the seed is applied in deciding to whom the issue belongs in case the same has been procreated out of wedlock. The decision arrived at is that it belongs to the master of the field (i.e., the wedded husband) and not to the actual procreator or the natural father. This principle is followed in the concept of *Niyoga* also where the issue is procreated officially and not surreptitiously. In the Southern version of the *Mahābhārata* this maxim is generally accepted and specifically applied to some definite cases, e.g., in the cases of a *vāgu* (?) a prostitute, an actress, a milkmaid, a female singer with a stringed instrument, weaver, Kirāta and Śabara women and a

[1] III.

[2] XIII 15†D10S cv.

[3] I 37†D3T (T1 excepted) G.

dancing girl, their sons are supposed to belong to their husbands.[1] In the case of a prostitute there is an optional provision that her son may belong to the man who approaches her during her *ṛtu*.[2]

A son, born out of wedlock of a woman, whose husband is alive, is called *Kuṇḍa* and that born out of wedlock of a woman whose husband is dead is called *Golaka*. They are supposed to be the sons of the woman's husband and not of the natural father, but they are unfit to offer worship to gods or oblations to the manes; however, their children are entitled to all religious rites.[3]

Another authority from South, however, holds that *Kānina, Sahoḍha, Kuṇḍa, Golaka*, a son of an *Arudhapatikā* and also that of a *Patitā* are all *Visvacāṇḍālas* and even worse than an eater of dog's meat.[4]

An issue raised on a slave girl can free its maternal relatives from bondage through their relationship with the master through its mother of which it is the evident sign.[5]

Preference is shown to sons born of one's own loins. "Only sons born of one's lawfully wedded wife can perform one's obsequies and only through them the family prospers."[6]

Doubt about fatherhood can be dispelled by gait, voice, memory, strength, character, erudition, valour, daring, temperament, hair, and curlings. Similarity of these confirms fatherhood.[7]

On the other hand; "sons produced by strangers on one's wife, even though accepted as such are only enemies. They hate and disobey the (legal) father, who in his turn also hates them but that is not the case with sons of one's own loins."[8]

Being a natural son is not enough. He is expected to be well behaved. It is true that a son is called a '*putra*' because the rescues (*trāyate*) his father from the hell *pud*, but he also must possess the qualities of a son; otherwise he is not fit to be called one. The son that is endowed with more qualities than the rest is considered as the

[1] XIII 7A†D10 Scv LL 240-245.
[2] ibid., LL 198-99.
[3] ibid., LL 132-159.
[4] XIV 4†TGM2-4 LL 475-477.
[5] XIII 7A†D10 Scv.
[6] IV 265*S.
[7] I 669*D4 S.
[8] I 643*S (G6 om 2 lines).

eldest.[1] The son who is dumb, blind, deaf, leperous, who does not discharge his duty, who is a thief or sinful is not considered an eldest son though he is so in age.[2]

A Kashmiri Vyāsaïd states that only an obedient son can inherit his father's property.[3]

A Kashmiri poet again adds a psychological touch by making Gāndhārī unsatisfied with 100 sons and making her want a daughter also, for women are highly delighted to have a son-in-law. She also points out that her husband should not miss the *loka* obtained through a daughter's son.[4] However, in the Text we find a daughter saying, "A daughter is a misery."[5]

In the case of girls of good families, their parents and other relatives have the right to select a husband for them. After the marriage had been duly performed, the husband became the authority.[6]

A girl who had come of age and maintained her purity is called a *Kanyā*; only her parents, brother, maternal uncle or paternal uncle can give her away in marriage; but the person concerned must carefully consider before he does so.[7]

(V) MARRIAGE

There are five types of marriages, one taking place through Dharma; two, taking place through monetary considerations; three, taking place through mutual love; four, through fear; and five, through force.[8] As an instance of marriage through monetary considerations we find that Śalya with hesitation states the practice of his family and Bhīṣma agreeing to it offers gold, jewels, elephants, horses, chariots, clothes and ornaments in return of the bride Mādrī.[9]

[1] I 845*D-2 (marg) T1 G1-6M.
[2] I 846*G1-3.
[3] I 848* K3.
[4] I 63†Ś1 K0-3.
[5] I 147. v.11.
[6] XIII 19*D 10 S.
[7] XIII 15†D10 S cv.—LL 4486-89.
[8] ibid. LL 4490-91.
[9] I 61†K4 ÑBD.

A daughter inherits one-fourth of her father's property; in the opinion of some people a daughter without brothers inherits the whole of it.[1]

(VI) FAITHS, BELIEFS AND SUPERSTITIONS

Great emphasis has been laid on correct performance of various rites. If performed in the wrong way, they could produce quite the contrary effects, e.g. Śakas, Cīnas, Kambhojas, Pāradas, Śabaras Tuṣāras, Yavanas, Dārvas, Daradas, Veṇas, Kaṅkaṇas, Āndhras, Niragas, Gandhikas, Dramidas, Barbaras, Cūcukas, Kirātas, Pārvateyas, Kolas, Colas, Khasakas, Arukas, Dohas and other Mleccha tribes became outcastes because they resorted to religious practices in a wrong way. They are irreligious and cruel in their present life and after death they go to hell, and afterwards are born as lower animals.[2]

(i) Sacrifice

Even Brahmins cannot escape punishment for neglecting to know details of sacrifices, or for adversely criticising the institution of sacrifices that involves slaughtering of animals. They go to hell and stay there for hundreds of thousands of years in blood and pus, being eaten by worms.[3] The idea of sacrifice is sometimes sublimated, e.g., a sacrifice with five gifts viz. eyes, mind, polite speech, following and waiting upon a guest is mentioned.[4]

(ii) Śrāddha

Next in importance to sacrifice comes *Śrāddha*. After performing *Śrāddha* or after partaking of food in it, if a man approaches a woman (that same day ?) his ancestors lie in his semen for one month.[5] According to Devanagāri Composite 5-7 the ancestors have to subsist on semen for one month.

[1] XIII 308*T 2.3.6.

[2] XIII 10†D10 S cv. LL 30-37.

[3] XIV 4†. TGM2-4 L 2676.

[4] III 12* N (except K3; K1.4 missing).

[5] XIII 14†V1BDn D4-9Cv.

If Brahmins unfit to be invited for meals eat any offerings made to gods, they go to the demons. If a person after partaking a *Śrāddha* meal studies the Vedas or has relations with a Śūdra woman, his dead ancestors lie in his semen. If Śrāddha meals are offered to a physician, they lie in pus and blood, if offered to a temple priest they come to nothing and to a usurer they are useless, if given to a merchant they are useful neither here nor in the next world, given to a Brahmin born of a remarried mother food is wasted. If meals in honour of gods or manes are given to impious and characterless persons, they come to nought but if they are so offered knowingly and deliberately, the manes of the host eat faeces.[1]

Of the three balls of rice in the *Śrāddha* ceremony, one is to be thrown into water. It pleases the moon who in its turn pleases gods and manes. The second is to be eaten by the wife of the *Yajamāna,* in which case the ancestors grant her a son. The third is offered in fire, with which the manes are pleased and grant desired boons.[2]

(iii) Cows

Cows are extravagantly glorified in the *Anuśāsana parvan.* Here are some of the additions made by redactors. Indra once approached the cow Surabhi and prayed for nectar. Surabhi asked him to assume the form of her calf and drink her milk. Indra did accordingly and on asking what he should do in return, was told that he should always respect cows and Brahmins. Indra also prayed to be allowed to reside together with other deities in the body of the cow. Surabhi allowed the deities to reside in whichever part of her body the gods liked.[3]

Tawny cows (Kapilās) were held in special reverence. Their milk, curds, and ghee were to be offered in sacrifices. All holy places were supposed to be situated on the tips of horns of a Kapliā. One sipping a Kapilā's urine, first thing in the morning, was supposed to be free of sins committed during thirty years. Even hearing her bellowing, one can emancipate oneself from sins committed during the last twenty four hours.[4]

[1] XIII 409*VI BDn D5. 8.10.
[2] XIII 14†VI BDn D4-9 cv.
[3] XIII 9†D10 S cv.
[4] XIV 4‡TGM 2-4 LL 1791-1905.

Various gods reside in various parts of a Kapilā cow and not of every cow, e.g., Viṣṇu and Indra in the tips of horns, Brahmā in the middle of the horn, Śiva in the forehead, Vedas with all the ancillary sciences in the breath, Gaṅgā in urine, Lakṣmī in cowdung, sky in hump, four oceans in the udders, etc.[1]

"Nothing is holier than cows. They are related to the gods such as mothers to Rudras and Sādhyās, sisters to Ādityas, daughters to Vasus, Pūṣan is their lord and King Varuṇa is their glory and Viśve Devas their protegés. Supreme importance of cows should be impressed on the public. To listen to or to lecture on the subject is equally meritorious. Fantastic rewards are promised to one who serves the cows or repeats the Gomatī formula.[2] Cows given away as gifts fulfil any desire of the donor."[3]

(iv) Miscellaneous Superstitions

Sāvitrī is superior to all the four Vedas put together. Sāvitrī is the essence of the Vedas even like honey extracted from flowers.[4] Giving away gold is even more rewarding than giving away land or cows.[5] Water of the Ganges burns even a hundred sins like fire consuming fuel.[6] A Vibhītaka tree (Terminalia *belerica*) is supposed to be unclean because Kalī resided in it for some time.[7] Those who remember Śaryāti, Sukanyā, Cyavana, Śakra and Aśvins after meals, will never lose their eyesight.[8] Piety is enhanced by describing Bhṛgu, power increases by bowing down to Vaśiṣṭha, saluting Raghu one becomes victorious in war, and one extolling Aśvins does not suffer from any disease.[9]

One should not look at the sun, eclipsed, reflected in water or at noon.[10] Sellers and writers of the Veda were supposed to go to

[1] ibid., LL 2004-2030.
[2] XIII 9B†D10S cv.
[3] XIII 367*D4-9.
[4] XIV 4†TGM2-4 LL 513-524.
[5] XIII 389*V1 BDn D1 2.4.10.
[6] III 13†1.2 BDc Dn D4.6
[7] III 333*D1.2.
[8] VII 608*D1.2.
[9] XIII 18 V1 BDn D4. 5.8. LL 171-75.
[10] Cf. Manu 4.37 cd.

hell.[1] Eating of fish and turtles is supposed to be a great sin on the part of people from Sindh.[2] Sahadeva smilingly tells Yudhiṣṭhira that Kali age is at hand since when there was any dispute regarding sale of a building both the owner and the king became greedy![3]

Parts of body from foot to head are to be identified (? *Vidyāt*) when the moon is in various constellations in order to become charming and beautiful.[4]

There are some observances which the redactors take care to mention, e.g., Bhīma goes round Brahmins, has (a look at) eight auspicious things, drinks Kairātaka wine, is blessed by the Brahmins and feels hopeful about victory. Favourable winds forecast victory for him.[5] Warriors on both the sides offer morning Sandhyā to the rising sun.[6] Droṇa concentrates his thoughts on Viṣṇu and begins to repeat '*oṁkāra*'.[7]

Pāṇḍavas go to the river, Brāhmaṇī and pay respects to Śiva in water, take bath at Prayāga pañcaka, go to Himālaya, bathe in Hansodaka, pay homage to Kedāra, offer Śrāddha to manes, propitiate gods, go to river Nandā, etc.[8]

Those urinating against the sun, get unchaste wives, haters of fire are pestered with abortions, and fire does not accept their oblation in sacrifices. If men partake of milk of a cow the calf of which is still too young, they have no issue in their family.[9]

Immediately after food one should not enjoy sexual pleasure; one should not run nor laugh too much.[10] A husband of a pregnant wife will not get a son if he takes bath in sea, takes a shave or eats in a Śrāddha.[11] Some people revive after death because the messengers of death sometimes commit mistakes and carry away a person of the same name and the mistake is rectified afterwards.[12]

[1] XIV 4†TGM2-4 L2098.
[2] VII 370*B1-4.
[3] XVII 5*D5.6.S.
[4] XIII 12A†V1 B2 4.5 Dn D 5.8.10.
[5] VII 769*Dc1 Dn D2 S.
[6] VII 1268*Dn2 D3 5.6.
[7] VII 1331*K2 (marg.) 4 D (except Dn).
[8] XIV 10*K2.3.
[9] XIII 14†V1 BDn D 4-9 LL 132-133.
[10] XIII 510*T2.3.GM1-3.
[11] XIII 512*D10 TG.
[12] XIII 15†D10S cv LL 2247-2455.

Sacred trees are the resorts of deities, Yakṣas, demons and serpents, also of ghosts, Gandharvas and nymphs.[1] After spitting, coitus, sneezing, changing the position of the sacred thread, at the sight of a woman fetching water one should sip water. He should touch the ear uttering *Oṁkāra* and look at the sun.[2] One should sip thrice before taking food and thrice after, thrice again and should rinse twice.[3] One should sip twice in a temple, when among a herd of cows, near a holy tree, in the crops, in a resting place, when about to eat, after eating, after sneezing, after a journey and after answering calls of nature.[4] One studying the Veda on a holiday loses Vedic scholarship and life also.[5] Vedas should not be studied in the presence of a Śūdra or an outcaste or in the hearing of a Cāṇḍāla.[6]

One should clean one's teeth except on Amāvasyā, reading Itihāsa-Purāṇa and the Veda, giving gifts and contemplation upon the Gāyatrī and performing Sandhyā; all these should always be performed attentively.[7] One should observe silence while cleansing teeth, during Sandhyā and while defecating so also when engaged in *japa* and while bathing and during coitus.[8]

According to Devanagari Composite 4-7 a man obstructing marriage of a girl is born a eunuch again and again.[9] Belief in omens appears quite widespread, cf., omens that forecast one's death,[10] ill-omens forecasting destruction of Dvārakā.[11] A list of ill omens;[12] Ill omens foreboding destruction of Kaurava army.[13] Anthills and beehives (*madhūkāni*) in houses, fields and threshing grounds, and doves in stables for horses, elephants and chariots portend ill.[14] The planets Venus, Mars and Mercury were behind

[1] XII 163*D7S.
[2] XIII 507*D10S.
[3] XIII 483*V1 B Dn D1.3.4.10.
[4] XIII 484*T1-3 GMD.10
[5] XIII 488*V1 B Dn D5 8.10.
[6] XIII 489*M1-3.
[7] XIII 491* S.
[8] XIII 492*S and XIII 493*T1.
[9] XIII 14†P 898 fn.
[10] XIII 11 D10S LL 370-384.
[11] XVI 12*N (except D5.6) T3 13*T1 15*N (Except D4) T2.3. 16*K4.
[12] II 27†G1 and II 28†S.
[13] IV 798*N. 799*S (G1.om.)
[14] VI 14*D3.

Pāṇḍavas and in front of Kauravas (an ill omen). Flames appeared on the tips of weapons and crows and owls sat on heads and banners.[1]

There are some superstitions about astronomy and geology and the other world, e.g., according to Kashmiri 2 Nilakantha's Devanagari, the spots on the moon are the outline of the Jambudvipa reflected in the moon,[2] and Telugu 1 and Grantha 4 believe them to be the outline of Sudarśanadvīpa resembling a hare.[3]

At the very beginning (Manvantara) earth was believed to have become uneven. Vainya removed the masses of boulders with the tip of his bow and increased (the heights of) mountains with them.[4] The distance between the mundane world and the world of Death is 84,000 *yojanas*. Only those giving gifts of various kinds to Brahmins go there in different vehicles and are waited upon by nymphs.[5]

VII. ECONOMIC THOUGHT

The importance of wealth has been given its due place in the *Mahābhārata*. "Wealth has held the world together. Wealth is (the cause of) men's arrogance. So one must appreciate wealth."[6] At the same time Northern redactors play down the importance of wealth. "Wealth is not all in all. It is complacency that matters. Better not to desire for any wealth at all. Wealth is meant for sacrifices. Wealth obtained should be given way and not enjoyed or wasted; however, to give money to the undeserving and not to give it to the deserving are both great sins. Besides sages go to heaven even without wealth."[7]

Wealth is exhausted by lapse of good luck and not by enjoyment.[8] Moneyed people can easily get out of difficulties. A person without money has no place either in this world or in the next.[9]

[1] IX 61*Dn3 (marg) D4.8.9.
[2] VI 32*.
[3] VI 33*.
[4] XII 132*K4.5 V1 BDn D1-3.5.6.8.
[5] XIV 4† TGM2-4 LL 710-839.
[6] XII 203*D7S.
[7] XII 4† N (except D7).
[8] XIII 610*S.
[9] XIII 15† D10 S Cv LL 1469-70.

One should make four divisions of one's income: one division each for religious purposes, for pleasure, for investment, and for falling back upon adversity, respectively. The portion for religious purposes should be spent on the following items—sacrifices, feeding the hungry, to help those in distress, worshipping gods, honouring Brahmins, worshipping the manes, honouring relatives, residence, and the special religious rites. One-fourth of income should be invested in—getting a position with good prospects, activities connected with one's profession, and other undertakings such as entertaining guests, marriages, giving a start to sons, for profits, and for meeting calamities. One should part with money only after considering consequences, gain and purpose. Without money, one cannot achieve anything, however hard one may try.

One-fourth portion of income is to be spent on maintaining oneself, for nutritious and tasty food, entertainment, enjoyments, journeys, hobbies, and presents, but in this case also one must weigh carefully the pros and cons before spending.

The remaining fourth part should be saved for the rainy day (in the case of the king) for restoration to the lost kingdom, for meeting famines, and for others treatment of serious diseases, old age, resisting the enemy, meeting loss due to thoughtless adventures, for undertaking journeys abroad, and for getting out of difficulties.[1]

[1] ibid., LL 1441-1467

CHAPTER SIX

ETHICS AND MORALITY

(I) GENERAL ETHICAL IDEAS

REDACTORS want to stress that even sages and other great men cannot resist temptations of women[1] and also that nothing can prevent men's minds or eyes when they look at beautiful women.[2]

Whatever sin a man commits, he must proclaim it, for sin and merit both grow if concealed, and decrease if proclaimed. So one should make one's sin public and conceal merit. Sin is destroyed by proclamation and repentance.[3]

An idea of the high ethical concepts the Southern versions want to put forth may be gathered from the following: Indra tells his charioteer that he bows down to those who, contemplating on piety, prosperity, and pleasure, do not deviate from the right path, those having beauty enough to entice women are turned away from pleasures, whom learning, wealth or power does not shake, whose prosperity and pleasure are based on piety; and piety and pleasure are moderate; also to chaste women; to those who enjoying pleasures in youth go to heaven after death through penance, who are not addicted to enjoyment, who are steadfast in piety with full control of senses and whose purity is extolled by others.[4]

Vidura expresses his inability to entertain Kṛṣṇa properly. Nevertheless Kṛṣṇa is pleased with his modesty and offers to Vidura his desired boon which indicates a Northerner's concept of an ideal life. Vidura asks birth in a respectable family and constant thinking of piety, no greed for another's wealth and no lust for another's wife, no taste for scandal mongering, a seat surrounded

[1] I 2008*D4 (marg. sec. m).
[2] IV 430*TG2.
[3] XIV 4† TG M2-4 LL 238-45.
[4] XIII 10A† D10S.

by sons, a house full of Brahmins, and the heart full of thoughts of scriptures, that he should be a donor of food in drought, a distributor of wealth in times of plenty and a rescuer of people in danger.[1]

Purity is generally said to be of three kinds viz., that of body, mind and speech; but the Southern Recension wants to make a finer division and speaks of five kinds of purity, viz., that of heart, of action, of family, of body, and of speech. Of these, purity of heart is the best.[2]

In deciding what is good or bad one should follow the example of great men because they are endowed with penance and set the norm. The acts of sages should not be judged. Sages are their own masters. Sages should not be criticized for their behaviour, for their penance is their sanction.[3]

If morality is not observed, retributions follow, while observance or morality ensures freedom from calamities. "Great calamities arise because of adultery on the part of women, injustice from the kings and faulty performance of ritual on the part of Brahmins. Also drought, fatal epidemics, hunger and strifes. Where Brahmins are well regulated there is no fear from Yakṣas, demons, goblins or Asuras. Where women are chaste, Gandharvas, nymphs, Siddhas, serpents and other reptiles do not dare to kill human beings. Where the four *Varṇas* are pious, there is no fear of drought or scarcity or tumult. If a king is pious, there is no defeat and omens foreboding dire calamities either from heaven or from human beings do not appear."[4]

(II) THE AGENT

Whether an act is moral or immoral depends on the Agent's mind.[5] Without purity of heart *Agnihotra,* residence in forest, Vedic study, gift, etc., are in vain. Gods are pleased by purity of heart only.[6] A Brahmin accepted a gift of a thousand cows from Yayāti only after he said that he did not declare his deeds, nor did he promise

[1] V 4† K5.
[2] XIV 4† TG M2-4 LL 3229-31.
[3] XIII 7† D10S Cv.
[4] XII 194*D7 TG M.
[5] XIII 301*T2 3G.
[6] XIV 4† TG M2-4 LL 3215-22.

what was not to be given, and having once promised he was happy to give.[1] Whatever an angry man sacrifices, gives or offers in fire, whatever penance he practises, Yama carries it away. An angry man's action bears no fruit.[2]

(III) DHARMA

Non-violence, truth, absence of wrath, austerities, gifts, self-control, knowledge, absence of jealousy, envy, and rivalry, and character, this is the essence of ancient Dharma taught by Parameṣṭhin, the God of gods.[3] There is no other holy place, no other god, no other Dharma (than parents and their service).[4] Rescue of a person in mortal danger is equal to all the sacrifices duly performed put together.[5]

A person protecting others from fear goes to the highest abode, i.e. Viṣṇu's abode. The merit obtained by such a person is superior even to that obtained through a thousand sacrifices or constant feasts. All beings are afraid of death, so a wise man should show mercy to all.[6] Only he deserves to be called a 'man' who for the sake of his kinsmen in distress and bemoaning, throws away his life in a battle.[7] Even Rākṣasas are credited with having ideas of morality and good behaviour. Yudhiṣṭhara says to Jaṭāsura, "Especially the Rākṣasas are watching your pious behaviour. Rākṣasas are the root of piety (Dharma)!"[8]

Death is a mighty leveller, the wise as well as the foolish, the rich as well as the poor, when once under the spell of the great Father (i.e., Death) sleep well, free of all fever. There is no distinction among their skeletons and their family—form or qualifications make no difference. Why should people then be foolish and jealous of each other?[9]

A list of vices, that make a person unfit for communion with gods,

[1] III 21† K2.4 Dc. Dn D1-4.6 G3.
[2] XIII 1† D10S cv.
[3] XII 252*S.
[4] XII 298*K3.
[5] III 642*DC2 Dn2 D1 G3.
[6] XI 26*Ko m 3 N̄1 B Dn D1.3-7-9.
[7] VII 19*K2.4. Dn D1.2.4.5.7.8.
[8] III 778*B Dc Dn D4.6.
[9] XI*12 N (Ś2 K4 D8 missing) also XI 17*N1 BDn D1.3-7Ś K3.

includes impiety, imperfection, lack of penance, unsteady mind, loud or complaining nature, greed, betrayal of friends, too much pride, heartlessness, thieving, adultery with preceptor's wife, addiction to drinking, etc. On the contrary virtues like kindness, sympathy, truthfulness, self-control, steady character, piety, tolerance, good personality(?), compassion, respect for elders, gratitude, friendship (for all) and devotion to Brahmins are the qualities that make one worthy of communion with gods.[1]

(IV) HUMAN RELATIONS

One should respect the respectable and condemn those who deserve condemnation.[2]

The following list of persons whose food may be accepted at certain risks gives some idea about the virtues valued by the redactors concerned. Food from a king deprives one of lustre, that from a Śūdra of Brahmanic power, from a goldsmith as also that from a widow the life. A usurer's food is faeces, and a prostitute's food is male organ and also that of those who tolerate a paramour and of those who are under the thumb of their wives. Also food from an initiated person, from a miser, and from a seller of sacrifices(?).[3]

(V) SIN AND EXPIATION

In order to be absolved from sin arising out of killing animals like ants, insects, serpents, goats, birds, etc., one should think of Gaṅgā, Kurukṣetra, Gayā, Prabhāsa, and Puṣkara and take bath. One touching a cow's back and saluting her tail is as good as one taking bath for three days and fasting. If one, ascending a mountain stands on one leg and raising the arms and folding them keeps on gazing at the sun, one is endowed with great austerities and one gets the merit of having kept a fast.[4] Brāhmin, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya or Śūdra, anyone is to be punished without hesitation if he commits a crime wilfully. After the king punishes a culprit, he is absolved of his sin and goes to heaven.[5]

[1] III 3† K4 D2.5.
[2] XIII 519*D10 TG.
[3] XII 52*K4.5. V1 BD (except D4, D7 om).
[4] ibid.
[5] XII 30*S.

Expiation for ungratefulness is death. Even after death, ungrateful persons stay in hell eternally and with a great difficulty are born as human beings.[1]

Many easy ways of expiation are given in the Vaiṣṇava Dharma Section (XIV 4† TGM2-4 LL 3171-3210) e.g., at the sight of a holy Brahmin one should with mind fixed on Kṛṣṇa make obeisance to him, uttering the Mantra *Namo Brahmaṇyadevāya* and go round him thrice repeating the same Mantra or place on forehead earth dug by a wild boar and make a hundred Prāṇāyāmas etc.[2] Sin is expiated by declaring it, repenting, giving away gifts, austerities, abstaining from repeating it, pilgrimage or repetition of Śruti and Smṛti.[3] Performing sacrifice, fasting without being told by anybody to do so, knowledge of the Self, muttering prayers, names of holy rivers, holy mountains; feeding upon gold (?); bāth with jewels, visiting temples, eating ghee, all these undoubtadly purify a man. Nobody can be wise through pride. One desirous of long life should drink hot(?) for three nights.[4]

(VI) SEX RELATIONS

In the Constituted Text, in keeping with the ideas of different times, various forms of sex relations are described.

The great sage Parāśara is enamoured of the beautiful daughter of the fisherman who is taking him across the river in a boat. He proposes to satisfy his passion then and there and openly expresses his desire. The beautiful damsel, Matsyagandhā, feels nervous, expresses her fears as to how her father would react if she loses her virginity, then her sense of shame as there are sages and others on both sides of the river watching them. Parāśara lays her fears at rest by promising that she will regain her maidenhood immediately after she has satisfied the sage's desire and her sense of shame by creating mist that envelops the ferry. The maiden then has no further objection and the sage fulfills his will. Vyāsa is immediately born as a result of the union.[5]

Some Southern versions, in keeping with later ideas of morality,

[1] XIII 2† D1oS cv Kum Mad.
[2] XIV 4† TGM2-4 LL 3171-3210.
[3] XII 8*K2.4. BDa Dn D2-8.
[4] XII 50*K4SV1 BD (except D1.4.7).
[5] I 57.56-69.

wanted to whitewash the whole incident and save the great sage Vyāsa from the infamy of illegitimacy. They were not even satisfied with allowing a Gāndharva form of marriage which the Constituted Text does not even hint at. In these versions Parāśara does not deem it fit to marry Matsyagandhā in the Gāndharva form which is unworthy of a Brahmin, for whom *Brāhma, Daiva, Ārṣa* and *Prajāpatya* are the only forms prescribed. So Vasiṣṭha the (grand) father of Parāśara and the father of Matsyagandhā appear on the scene. A regular offer of the bride is made to the bridgroom's father, is duly accepted and then with all the due rites and formalities the wedding is solemnized.[1] The only thing that the poetaster forgets is that if Matsyagandhā is the lawfully wedded wife of Parāśara, she cannot again marry King Śantanu.

Similarly, Yayāti has a clandestine affair with Śarmiṣṭhā. This Asura Princess has been obliged to serve Devayānī as a slave and is fascinated by the attractive Yayāti. She approaches him requesting for the satisfaction of her *ṛtu* and puts forth the spacious argument that the husband of one's friend is one's own husband and also it is the Dharma of a man to see that a woman's *ṛtu* does not go waste if she approaches him. Yayāti after expressing his concern for the wrath of Śukra, his father-in-law, yields and has four children of Śarmiṣṭhā.[2] But the Southern Version makes Yayāti perform a regular marriage with Śarmiṣṭhā in the presence of an imposing gathering of priests, preceptors and ministers on an auspicious day. The Brahmins get their customary gifts.[3] All this is done without the knowledge of Devayānī who comes to know of the relationship between her friend and her husband only after four children were born to them![4]

In the famous episode of Duḥṣanta and Śakuntalā also, a *Gāndharva* marriage takes place between the couple and it is consummated immediately but the Southern Recension introduces a regular marriage again. According to it Śakuntalā urges Duḥṣanta to marry her with proper rites. She makes available the whole paraphernalia of sacrificial untensils, Darbha grass, flowers, rice, grains, offerings, fried grains, sand, and priests.[5] Duḥṣanta also

[1] I 36† D3 T2 G (except G6).
[2] I 77.
[3] I 807*S (M makes no reference to the auspicious day).
[4] I 78.17.
[5] I 609*D4 (marg.sec.m.)S.

agrees (according to another version) and then calling his priest requests him to perform the marriage in the proper manner so that his son may not be devoid of rites.[1]

Some Northern versions also give accounts of regular marriages. For instance, Yayāti and Devayānī become man and wife with the blessings of Devayānī's father Śukra. The Text does not refer to any form of marriage but Kashmiri 3 does not want to keep it ambiguous and states that they were married in the Gāndharva form of marriage;[2] whereas Kashmiri 4, Nilkantha's Devanāgarī, and Devanāgarī Composite 4.5 (both latter marg.) state that the marriage took place as laid down in the scriptures.[3]

In the episode of the marriage of Arjuna and Subhadrā also the same solicitude for preserving the later ideas about morality and marriage, is to be found. The affair is simple enough in the Constituted Text where true to the then prevailing Kṣatriya customs Arjuna carries away Subhadrā forcibly, though on the advice of her brother, Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna also marries her officially afterwards.

The Southern Recension cannot tolerate the idea of a young man carrying away a young girl who is not his wife, so it makes the young couple man and wife full 22 days in advance. Arjuna's natural father Indra along with his wife arrives on the scene in company of Nārada, Vasiṣṭha, Arundhatī, and other sages so also the bride's parents and brother Kṛṣṇa and other relatives though poor Balarāma, without any apparent reason is left in the dark and literally asleep.[4]

Attempt is made to lessen the monstrosity of Draupadī's polyandrous marriage by inventing a precedent to it. King Nitantu had five sons named Sālveya, Śūrasena, Śrutasena, Tindusāra, and Atisāra. Śaibyā, daughter of Bhumāśva, got them as husbands in a svayaṁvara and had five sons from these five husbands, who were founders of five branches of the Matsya line.[5]

An issue of illict union is supposed to be lacking in normal and

[1] I 610*D4.

[2] I 790.*

[3] I 791.*

[4] I 113† 114† D4 (marg. sec. m) S 115†S D4 (suppl. fol.sec.m.) K4 (marg. sec.m).

[5] I 101† D4 (marg. sec.m.) S.

healthy psychology. Bhīṣma tells Karṇa that he was born through lapse of piety and he owes his mentality to that fact.[1]

Adultery is frowned upon. One committing adultery falls into hell for as many thousands of years as there are pores in the body of a woman.[2] There is nothing like adultery that shortens men's life and also wealth.[3]

Premarital purity is insisted upon in the case of a male also. "One must not have any sexual pleasure before marriage or else he must undergo an expiation. One must not look at another's wife nor remain in the company of women in private. One must exercise control over senses and keep purity of mind in dreams."[4]

A biological reason is assigned for this puritanic attitude. One should not discharge one's seed on eunuchs, barren women, lower animals, and on the surface of the earth because it produces no issue if spilt in this way. A man incurs the sin of killing a foetus by destroying the semen.[5] However, the most repulsive claim is made by Jayadratha on behalf of royalty, "A sister, a sister's daughter and a brother's wife, kings have relations with all these."[6]

(VII) AHIṂSĀ

In some places in the Epic *Ahiṁsā* is spoken of as contributing to one's religious merit.[7] In some Devanāgarī manuscripts Ahiṁsā

[1] VI 506* Dn2 D4.6.8.
[2] III 480*Dn 1.2. D4-10.
[3] XIII 481*T1 G1.3. and 482*T2.3.G2.4.
[4] XIII 497*T 1.2.3. G M.
[5] XIII 15†D1oS cv LL 1021-25.
[6] III 1202*TG1.2.4.
[7] e.g. Abstaining from meat and wine is equal to offering one *Aśvamedha* sacrifice every month for a hundred years.
(XIII 116.10, 16).
Ahiṁsā is the greatest *Dharma.*
(XIII 114).
Importance of *Ahiṁsā* and sin in eating flesh.
(XIII 115).
Importance of *Ahiṁsa* and of abstaining from eating meat.
(XIII 115-17).
A list of kings that abstained from meat eating in the bright half of autumn.
(XIII 116.65-9).
Importance of *Ahiṁsā: Ahiṁsā* is superior to gifts in all sacrifices, baths in all *tīrthas,* and fruit of all gifts (39).
(XIII 117. 37-41).

is said to contain all piousness as in the foot of an elephant feet of all animals are covered.[1]

Lip homage is paid to *Ahiṁsā* in the Southern Recension. Worship of gods, hospitality to guests, constant observance of piety, Vedic studies, sacrifices, penance, gifts, self-control, waiting upon teachers and elders, and pilgrimages are not equal to one sixteenth part of *Ahiṁsā*. This is a great secret.[2]

But the thinker appears to be practical enough, for he goes on to say, "It is next to impossible to observe *Ahiṁsā* completely since the whole universe is full of beings large and small, visible and invisible. Even food grains have life. Most of the animals, birds or beasts or fish or reptiles subsist only by eating each other. Only a person not eating anything can be considered non-violent, so also a person observing fast till death. However, all activity depends on mind. One should always consider that one is killing the one whose life has already drawn to a close and that one is only an instrument."[3]

The Mimāṁsā Principle, i.e. violence involved in a sacrifice is no violence, is upheld. Beasts killed in sacrifices go to heaven because they are sanctified by sacred chants and offerings (of their flesh), the three fires, gods, and protectors of the worlds are satisfied by their flesh and the sacrificer gets the merit of the sacrifice. Along with his wife, sons, parents, brothers, and the officiating priests he goes to heaven. (So killing of beasts in sacrifices does not constitute *Hiṁsā*.)[4] A Brahmin properly initiated for a sacrifice or a *Śrāddha* commits no sin even if he eats meat.[5] Animals slaughtered in sacrifices go to heaven along with the sacrificer and stay there as long as the latter does. Trees wish to be made into sacrificial posts, and so also animals to be slaughtered in sacrifices. Since animals themselves wish to be slaughtered, there is no violence *(Hiṁsā)* involved.[6]

Those Brahmins who refuse to perform Vedic sacrifices, because these involve violence, become Śūdras immediately and are born as Cāṇḍālas afterwards.[7]

[1] XIII 20†D4-8.
[2] XIII 15†D1oS cv LL 1228-32.
[3] ibid , LL 1095-1105.
[4] ibid., LL 1372-80.
[5] ibid., LL 2398-99.
[6] XIV 4†TGM2-4 LL 2687-95.
[7] ibid., LL 2697-98.

One who kills many souls and sacrifices to God through ritual is not touched by sin. Duties of all householders, gods and sages involve violence (Hiṁsā) and still they attain the highest state.[1] A utilitarian view is therefore taken. "If by killing one, many others will be happy, it is meritorious to kill him. How can it be sinful?"[2]

Soldiers will be positively committing sin if they resort to *Ahiṁsā*. Even persons believing that *Ahiṁsā* was the highest principle go to hell if they do not fight in battle, because in that case they prove false to the salt of their masters.[3]

A common sense point of view of the matter is taken in the following passage: "There is no sin in the opinion of Uśanas in killing a man who makes an attempt on one's life or destroys one's wealth or kills one's relatives or tries to poison and tries to kill by magic as laid down in the *Atharvaveda* or who insults one's wife. One should also kill a man who enters forcibly one's house, who tries to kill, offers things unfit to be eaten and drunk and sets fire. In case of massacre of cows and Brahmins and hair of women being seized kings should fight against even the creator God. Even an Āśramin should fight valiantly for the sake of cows and Brahmins and in calamities of the king, when the country is invaded, for self-defence and after hearing cries of women."[4] A spacious ground has been invented sanctioning butchery of poor herbivorous animals in hunts. A king incurs no sin by killing animals in forests because they desire the earth to be devoid of human beings and eat crops. It is duty of kings to punish the wicked.[5]

(VIII) GUEST WORSHIP

If a guest is driven away in the evening he takes away the merit of a householder maintaining an Agnihotra. On the other hand a satisfied guest absolves one from every sin except that of patricide, matricide and abusing a Brahmin.[6] One should properly entertain even an enemy when he comes as a guest. A tree does not take away its shade even from a wood-cutter.[7]

[1] XII I†D7S.
[2] XIII 15†D10S cv LL 2380-81.
[3] XIII 15†D10S cv LL 1203-5.
[4] XII 34†D7S.
[5] XIII 15†D10S cv LL 1271-75.
[6] XIII 1†D10 S cv.
[7] XII 374*K3.4V 1 BDa Dn1.3 D2.3.8.

IX. ĀPADDHARMA

A whole section is devoted to the treatment of deceptive policy.[1] Such a policy is to be resorted to only in exceptional circumstances, in times of difficulty. Hence it is called *Āpaddharma*, i.e., the way one should behave in difficulties. An interesting story of a mouse has been narrated to illustrate the Apaddharma policy.[2] The mouse when caught between an ichneumon and an owl takes recourse to his worst enemy, the wild cat caught in a net, and even after saving himself refuses to have anything to do with the cat.

At the same time emphasis has been laid on cultivation of virtues like self-control, austerity, truth and elimination of vices like avidity, passion, wickedness, etc. so that the chances of the deceptive methods being employed indiscriminately are minimized. Atonement is also insisted upon in case of any moral lapses committed in pursuance of such a policy. The Epic does not forget to narrate even Lord Kṛṣṇa and the peerless Yudhiṣṭhira were obliged to suffer in consequence of the deception they had indulged in, the latter only once.

Brahmins wielding weapons under calamities do not deserve blame, states the Epic while citing an instance of *Āpaddharma*.[3]

In such circumstances there are no natural friends and enemies. People become friends by doing good turns and enemies by doing bad ones.[4] One must behave in a crooked manner with cheats but in a straight forward manner with gentlemen.[5]

Dhṛtarāṣtra says that quarrel with a stronger enemy is not in the interest of anybody. Even bowing to the enemy's feet or by eating his left-overs, one should save one's life. Only if a person lives, he can attain to heaven (by offering sacrifices, etc.) A dead man has neither pleasure nor (can he do anything to attain) heaven. When destruction is at hand, a fool does not know the right course. He is under the influence of false sense of pride and is at a loss to know what should or should not be done.[6]

In a passage of 192 lines according to Malayali 3.5-8 Telugu and Grantha 1-6 Kashmiri 4 Nepali and Maithili Versions 1 Kaṇika

[1] XII Ch. 130-167.
[2] XII 136.
[3] XII 79.31-33.
[4] XII 200*D7S.
[5] XIII 15†D10S cv L 1555.
[6] VII 923*S cv.

(Kaniṅka according to Southern Recension) gives instruction to Dhṛtarāṣṭra in an unscrupulous policy which does not shy away from adopting any means fair or foul to achieve its goal. The story of the tiger, wolf, fox, mouse, and ichneumon is also told as an illustration.[1]

Arjuna justifies his action of severing the arm of Bhūriśravas while the latter was fighting with Sātyaki. Arjuna's case here appears to be quite convincing. In the Text he says that his vow is not to allow any of his protegés to be killed in the throw of arrows, quite a lame excuse (VII 118.23-25). But here Arjuna puts forth the following arguments.[2]

(i) Kṣatriyas fight together aided by their relatives and friends and not singly. They are protected by each other in the battle and everyone is not supposed to be on his own. So Arjuna was justified in protecting Sātyaki.

(ii) A person fighting for another must be protected by him. Sātyaki was fighting for Arjuna.

(iii) Bhūriśravas had himself attacked Sātyaki with the help of many friends and was about to kill him when Sātyaki was exhausted and lying on the ground.

(iv) That the friends of Bhūriśravas did not protect him, was not Arjuna's fault. Bhūriśravas could not protect himself, how would he protect others depending on him?

(v) Kauravas had killed Abhimanyu who had laid down his arms and was exhausted and without armour. This argument is found in the Text also.[3]

[1] I 81†.
[2] VII 13†Dn1 D2.3.5.6.S.
[3] VII 118.26.

CHAPTER SEVEN

POLITICAL THOUGHT

(I) GENERAL POLITICAL IDEAS[1]

Most of the political thought in the *Mahābhārata* is found in the *Rājadharma* part of the *Śāntiparvan* in the form of Bhīṣma's discourse to Yudhiṣṭhira.

Like most European writers on political science, Bhīṣma also starts with the problem of the origin of the state, but unlike them he propounds the theory that, to begin with, there was a divinely created and divinely ordained state in which the individuals were granted perfect freedom of will, along with certain internal and external checks upon the exercise of that freedom, a kingless state. In course of time evil dominated and Prajāpati taking pity on the distressed humanity laid down a code and appointed a king to enforce the same. Unfortunately, a few generations later, the king became a tyrant and the wise men of the day put him to death. This history repeats again and again. Dangers of anarchy are described in XII 68.

Then follow detailed instructions for day to day administration of the state. A king must behave like a gardener letting a hundred flowers bloom, stringing together diverse flowers, and not like an incendiary who burns down everything. Again, the king should collect revenue as a gatherer of honey collects honey always careful to avoid harm to the bees or like a milkman who leaves some milk for the calf and does not crush the udders empty.

A king should take care to appoint honest and efficient ministers, eight in number, who are to be assigned various offices.

It is the king's duty to see that the *Varṇas* are performing their respective duties and the *Āśramas* also are being duly

[1] Vide, Dr. S. K. Belvalkar's Introduction to the *Śantiparvan*. *Mahābhārata* BORI Vol. XIV. pp. CLXXXVII-CXCIX.

observed. He has to protect his subjects including traders and agriculturists.

The king has at times to wage wars, so he should take care of the capital of his kingdom and six kinds of castles. He is supposed to know the special characteristics of the different fighting races belonging to different parts of India, their weapons and manners of fighting. Everything being fair in war, the king can indulge in deceptive tricks and policies. One should speak sweet words to the enemy when wishing to strike, even while striking and after striking, one should show compassion pretending to weep and even lament. One should privately honour a killer and openly say, "He who killed him in battle, did me a great disservice".

Even after winning a victory, the vanquished king's land should never be annexed. After exacting tributes in token of recognition of the victor's superiority, the kingdom was restored to the defeated king or to his legal heir, in case the king had fallen in the battle.

It is, however, also recommended that a king should win a glorious victory by peaceful means, victory through war is of a lower type.

The king has to be very strict at times and punish lapses on the part of his servants, ministers and subjects.

A straight-forward policy is to be pursued in normal times but under stress and struggle one has to deviate from the same. Even when pursuing a straightforward policy one has to be conversant with the crooked one also so that one can counteract it if used by one's enemies.[1]

(II) THE KING

In the absence of a king there was chaos in the beginning. Seeing this Brahman established Manu on the throne.[2] But somehow kingship has been looked upon as something sinful and wicked. A king is supposed to be equal to ten prostitutes and to a butcher who is conducting ten thousand butcheries.[3] Men offered, among other things, a beautiful girl also to Manu to induce him to accept the office and responsibilities of kingship.[4]

[1] XII 101.4.
[2] XIII 15†D10S cv LL 881-82.
[3] XIII 423*D10 TG.
[4] XII 152*KS V1 BDa Dn. D2.3.5.6.8.

A king should carefully protect the learned whereby he is freed of all sins[1] (of ruling over a kingdom?).

However, some other thinkers hold that there is no sin involved in kingship. Kings killed their enemies for the welfare of their subjects or in their own interest. If any sin was involved therein how did they go to heaven and not to hell?[2] If kingship were a sin how could Svayaṁbhava Manu and other sovereign rulers have trodden this path? They enjoyed the earthly pleasures during the meritorious ages of Kṛta, Tretā, etc.[3]

Not only this, there is positive merit in holding the royal office. "If a king is bent upon either protection (of his subjects) or death (in doing so) he is as good as occupying a hermitage of Brahman.[4] All the Dharmas are included in *Rājadharma*. All activities have place in *Rājadharma*. There is no Dharma in the world superior to *Rājadharma*.[5]

Northern redactors, together with those from Tamilnadu, are agreed in holding that the king is at the root of the smooth functioning of the universe. They cannot bear to think of anarchy, for in anarchy there are many dangers. The king punishes the lawless; through fear of punishment, there remains law and order. Nobody will behave himself if he has no fear of law. The king supports righteousness, and righteousness sustains heaven. The king performs all sorts of sacrifices and sacrifices sustain gods. We get rain from gods, from rain springs up crops and crops are necessary for human beings. Thus, the king is the preserver of humanity. In fact he is equal to ten *Śrotriyas* (a learned Brahmin brought up in the correct Vedic tradition) put together.[6]

Naturally the king should be respected, nay, revered. Bhīṣma says, "The king is the greatest deity". So his whims should be pampered.[7]

He has happy prospects in the other world also. A king dying for the protection of his kingdom goes to the world of Indra, gets the company of heavenly damsels and is honoured there for as many

[1] XIII 17*D10S.
[2] XII 1†D7S.
[3] XII 13*D7S.
[4] XII 149*K2-5 V1 BDa Dn D2-8S.
[5] XII 142*D7S 143*M1.3 144*D7TG1-4 M1-4 cf. XII 63.25-30.
[6] I 402*K3.4 ÑV1 BD T1G.
[7] VI 204*S. Ko-2.

thousand years as there are pores on his body.[1] But a king has heavy responsibilities and his life is by no means a bed of roses, "Kingship is the fruit of great austerities".[2] So a king should be careful about the way he leads his life. The king should discipline himself first, then his servants, and lastly his subjects. The latter will try to follow the example of the king.[3] Subjects take after their king. If the latter is attached to piety, even impiety is transformed into piety.[4] A king should not indulge in drinking with his servants in the harem because the drunken servants may violate even his wives. He should drink only in the company of his wife.[5]

Devanāgarī Composite 7 and Ṣouthern Recension add the following to the list of desirable qualities of a king—not disparaging kinsmen, absence of deception of servants, efficiency in worldly dealings, absence of idleness, of sleep, of evil habits, of too much flippancy, respect for the elderly persons, enthusiasm, protecting the four *Varṇas,* observance of piety, observance of morality, industry, never underrating the strength of enemies, faculty to notice the weak points of enemies, obliging his friends, and knowing the comparative worth of his servants.[6]

(III) ADMINISTRATION

"Government is of two types, that based on reason *(Nyāya)* and that based on destiny *(Bhāgya)*. In the former, administration is carried on in consideration of political science without hatred to anybody; in the latter no heed is paid to the theories of political science, everything is done at the sweet will of the rulers; government servants are appointed at random without any thought of qualifications, culprits are not penalized, wicked and base persons are honoured, good people are oppressed. Such an administration leads to infamy; it is improper and meets with a tragic end. Law abiding citizens are exasperated by it. Kings ruling their kingdoms in this manner meet with infamy and calamity here and remain in hell

[1] XIII 15†D10S cv LL 1358-64.
[2] XIII 15†D10S cv L 876.
[3] XIII 15†D10S cv LL 888-95.
[4] XI 29*Ko (marg) Dn D1,3-7, 9.
[5] XV 25*K3.5. G1.
[6] XII 277*D7S (G3 missing).

hereafter till the universal destruction. Other wicked persons are released from hell in course of time, but not wicked kings."[1]

(IV) MINISTERS

"No king may hope to live long without ministers. So a king should, if he wants happiness, appoint as his minister a man with character, learning, and qualities."[2]

A king should not listen to the advice of women, foolish persons, as also of those whose intellect is muddled by fate, who are innocent of the Vedas, and whose minds are perverse. He should listen to the advice of renowned scholars, of those who have achieved every object of human desire, and who have proved their merit in wars. He should also depend on Fate, Effort and the three ends of human life and bow down to deities and Brahmins.[3]

Only a person, proficient in the Vedas and logic, should be appointed for consultation or giving judgments. As intellect trained in logic, law, and politics (statecraft) can achieve anything under the sun, those who are proficient in these sciences and scriptures and worldly affairs should be employed in every field; for they have achieved the highest water mark in wisdom.[4]

Learned and erudite Brahmins, Kṣatriyas, and Vaiśyas, well versed in the science of statecraft, should be appointed as ministers. The king should consult ministers (including Śūdras) in the order of their respective *Varṇa*.[5] The same manuscripts say later on, "Whether a man is born in a high or low family, the king should test his nature and appoint him to high or low duties accordingly."[6]

A king should consult five persons endowed with intellect, character and scholarship, and born in good families, but he should never consult fools.[7] The ministers, on their part, are expected to discharge their duty conscientiously. "A king indulging in wicked dice should be dissuaded by a good minister standing for justice or else if he trespasses the proper bounds of good behaviour and is a

[1] XIII 15†D10S cv LL 1001-15.
[2] XII 432*D4.
[3] XII 169*D7S.
[4] XII 32*D7S.
[5] XII 158*D7S.
[6] XII 12†D7S (G3 missing).
[7] XIII 15†D10 S cv LL 925-37.

bane to his family, he should be abandoned as being one with his mind perverted by Destiny", says Kṛṣṇa to Bhīṣma.[1] One should not accept service under a bad king.[2]

Taking advantage of one shortcoming of a person, his enemy should be instigated. He will bring to light the faults of the other. The king should, through the four means of strategy, create enmity (among his servants?) and then he should destroy a corrupt minister by means of another corrupt minister.[3]

(V) PUNISHMENT

Śiva together with Brahman, Viṣṇu and Indra and other gods and demons created 'punishment' for the preservation of the world and destruction of confusion of duties.[4] Devanāgarī Composite 7 and Southern Recension add 49 lines on Importance of Punishment and proper use of it quoting verbatim from the *Manusmṛti*.

In the Text also King Sudyumna punishes sage Likhita by amputating his hand and sage Śaṅkha says that only a king has the right to punish culprits.[5]

Punishment is severe in some cases. "If a person does not report to the king's court even when summoned, he should be put to death after confiscating all his property. No funeral rites should be performed in his case."[6]

Punishment is totally withheld in some other cases. "A king should not put to death his maternal uncle, sister's son, mother, father-in-law, teacher, and father even if they make an attempt on his life."[7]

(VI) DUTIES AND RIGHTS OF SUBJECTS

Kings are not the masters of their subjects, the latter hold some rights, to respect these is the duty of kings. Both are equally important limbs of body politic.

"A king is the best body of subjects and subjects are the incom-

[1] VI 204*S1 Ko-2
[2] XII 433*D4
[3] XII 203*D7S
[4] XII 13†D7S (G3 missing) cv.
[5] XII 24
[6] XII 3†D7S LL 65-9
[7] XII 15†D10S cv LL 1356-57

parable body of a king. No land can prosper without a king; but there can be no king without a land."[1] It is the privilege of the subjects to be protected and the duty of the rulers to protect them.[2] Telugu and Grantha 2 emphasize a king's duty to protect the distressed and especially ladies in difficulties. Draupadī, pursued by Kīcaka and finding no protection from Virāṭa, points this out and goes to the extent of saying that if a king fails to do so and also does not bring the culprits to book, he does not deserve to be a king.[3]

A king should identify his interests with those of his subjects. His everything is for the sake of his subjects and not to serve his own ends.[4] A king should look after the helpless, the diseased and old persons.[5] The Haihaya King Arjuna is described as having divided his revenue in four parts, each of which was utilized for maintaining an army, for welfare activities, for performing sacrifices, and for maintaining law and order.[6]

A sacrifice offered with the wealth snatched forcibly from his subjects, is not appreciated by good people. A sacrifice should be performed with wealth willingly contributed by subjects and when the rains are timely. No wealth should be taken from old people, minors, blind or miserable people or from ladies who are weeping. If children expect good things to eat and do not get them, what more pity can there be? If a learned Brahmin goes without food, the king incurs the sin of killing a foetus. If a Snātaka goes hungry in a kingdom, it meets adversity.[7]

The king, in whose kingdom shrieking women are carried away while their husbands and sons are weeping, is surely as good as dead.[8]

Solicitude for the welfare of subjects must be kept in mind even while waging wars. A king should, as far as possible, avoid war so as to protect human life. War must have some ground, and it should be some fault of the enemy.[9]

[1] XII 157*D7 TG2.3.M.
[2] XIII 15†D10S cv L 974.
[3] IV 329*TG2.
[4] XIII 15†D10S cv LL 919-21. cf., Kautilya. 1.19.34
[5] XIII 15†D10S cv LL 967.
[6] II 21†S. lines 408-11.
[7] XIII 337*N.
[8] ibid.
[9] XIII 15†D10S cv LL 979-80.

CHAPTER EIGHT

RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

THE religion of the *Mahābhārata* is closer to, nay, almost identical with modern Hinduism. As a matter of fact, "the literary works, which have left an abiding imprint on the socio-religious life sponsored by Hinduism, are not so much the Veda as the popular epics. Even among these popular epics, if there is any one single work which has proved to be of the greatest significance in making of the life and thought of the Indian people and whose tradition continues to live even to this day and influence in one way or another, the various aspects of Indian life, it is the *Mahābhārata*...."[1]

Though the Vedic deities and the Vedic religious thought are found referred to occasionally, in these literary works they are relegated to a very subordinate position. The dominating religion in the *Mahābhārata* is Kṛṣṇaism, Bhāgavatism, and next to that Śaivism.

(I) VEDIC DEITIES AND SACRIFICES

Vedic deities like Indra and Agni play a very minor role in the *Mahābhārata*. Apart from siring the principal *Mahābhārata* hero, Arjuna, Indra is represented as blessing Kṛṣṇa once.[2] In other places, he is the first person to learn the hymn of thousand names of Śiva from God Brahman and to pass it on, in his turn, to the God of Death;[3] he tries to hurl his thunderbolt at Śiva in the form of a child, but is petrified at its very sight.[4]

Agni, the other important Vedic deity gives the celebrated bow,

[1] R. N. Dandekar, *University of Ceylan Review*. Vol. XII. p. 66.
[2] I 225.13.
[3] XIII 17.164.
[4] VII 173.60.

Gāndīva, to Arjuna and is also described as falling in love with the beautiful daughter of King Nīla and ultimately marrying her in the form of a Brahmin.[1] The Sun God is represented as giving a boon to Yudhiṣṭhira (a copper pot according Kashmiri 2 Nilkantha's Devanāgarī and Devanāgarī Composite 5.6).[2] In addition to this we find a hymn consisting of 68 lines addressed by Yudhiṣṭhira to the sun preceding one devotional enough in 22 lines, addressed to the same god by the same person. The latter hymn contains 108 names of the sun.[3]

The sun is made to depend on the *Agnihotra* offerings. The sun will shine only so long as there are *Agnihotrins* in the world, for it is from their religious merit that the sun derives his light.[4] Everything is meant to subserve the *Agnihotra*. The whole creation is meant for *Agnihotra,* cows for sacrifice and gifts, so also gold and silver, darbha grass for being spread and for protection against demons, Brahmins for officiating deities in heaven for rescue, Kṣatriyas for protection, Vaiśyas for economic activity (in the interest of sacrifice) and Śūdras for serving the three higher *Varṇas*.[5]

Agnihotrins must not be burnt on funeral pyre by ordinary fire, or they have no hope to go to the heavens worthy of them. They are even born among the Śūdras, poverty stricken, diseased, and indulging in wicked deeds. Therefore, *Agnihotrins* should never leave their homes.[6]

(II) THE HINDU TRINITY

(i) Brahman

No reference to a god Brahman is found in the Vedic literature though the word Brahman occupies the most important place in the Upaniṣads, denoting as it does the Ultimate Reality, the root cause of the phenomenal world.

"The concept of Brahma (God Brahman of the Hindu Trinity)

[1] II 299*V1 BD, 300*Dn2 301*V1 BD (D6 marg.sec.m)
[2] III 21*, K2 Dn D5,6 (both latter marg.)
[3] III K2 BD (except D1; D3 missing)
[4] XIV 4†TGM2-4 LL 2715-16
[5] XIV 4†TGM2-4 LL 2699-2704
[6] ibid., LL 2720-25

seems to have been evolved out of the concept of the Prajāpati of the earlier Brahmanic Literature."[1]

In the Epic itself Brahman does not play a very conspicuous part, nor does he appear to be a very popular god.

Śiva is the first pupil of God Brahman in political science.[2] Śiva at the instance of Brahman created punishment for bringing the world to the straight path.[3]

The following references to God Brahman may be noted in the various versions. He is introduced at the beginning of the poem to enhance its glory.[4]

People bowing to Indra and Brahman go beyond calamities.[5]

Gods under the leadership of Viṣṇu approach God Brahman and bowing down to him report the doings of the demons Kāleyas.[6] In the Text we find that Śiva also approaches Brahman very humbly and the latter offers him his desired boon.[7]

Gods approach Brahman and complain about the earth being conquered by Hiraṇyākṣa. Brahman asks them to propitiate and request sage Agastya to drink up the waters of the ocean which being done, the gods again approach Brahman for further instructions.[8] In the Text Brahman assures the gods that a remedy had already been devised by him, viz., Viṣṇu would assume the form of a boar and digging up the earth where the demons are hiding will destroy them.[9] Brahman specializes in Brahmanic lore, Nārāyaṇa in Kṣatriya art and Śiva in both.[10]

The importance of Brahman, in the course of time began to wane and gave way to the glory of Viṣṇu. In the Text itself God Brahman reassures the gods who are frightened at the Boar Form of Viṣṇu. Then Brahman, gods and sages, all bow to Viṣṇu.[11]

[1] R. N. Dandekar, *Indian Mythology, Cultural Heritage* (Calcutta) Vol. III, p. 235
[2] XII 59.86
[3] XIII 122.22.36
[4] I 1†D2-12.14 Dn. Dr. T1. 2.G. K5
[5] XII 259*D7S cv. 16
[6] III 506*S (G1 missing)
[7] VII 48.19-21
[8] XII 553* Kumbhakonam edition cv.
[9] XII 202.11-14
[10] VIII 62*S
[11] XII 202-27-33

(ii) Viṣnu

The *Mahābhārata* has a strong Vaiṣnavite bias. There are additions to the already preponderating mass of Vaiṣnavite matter.

Yudhiṣṭhira does not feel consoled even after Bhīṣma had expounded to him various doctrines, but he is afraid of hell after death and residence in the mother's womb in rebirth. In order to escape from it he desires to hear the Vaiṣnava doctrine belonging to the Primeval Age (Ādya Yugadharma). In reply Bhīṣma reports the ancient dialogue between Nārada and Sanatkumāra. To Nārada's enquiries Sanatkumāra replies that Nārāyaṇa, the Great Man, is the creator, protector and destroyer of the universe and sages once reaching Him do not return to transmigratory existence. Beyond this Sanatkumāra has no knowledge of Nārāyaṇa.

But he explains the nine creations of the universe, their respective durations, destructions, etc.[1]

Even Garuḍa, the vehicle of Viṣnu does not know him well. Garuḍa's father Kaśyapa, who had vision of the God once, describes Him as follows: He has all the colours, thousands of bellies, and arms, two thousand huge faces, one eye and hundreds of eyes. He said that Kaśyapa would know Him only when he is free from attachment.

Garuḍa contemplating upon Nārāyaṇa went to Badarī. A man appeared before him wielding the conch, the disc, the mace, clad in yellow, and resplendent like the midday sun. He went to the north a distance of sixty-eight thousand one hundred *Yojanas* and also one hundred thousand and two hundred *Yojanas* and entered into fire that was a hundred *Yojanas* broad and twice in length. Śiva with Umā was practising penance in it. The Man, after a talk with Śiva, went beyond and entered a huge limitless darkness not lighted by the sun. When Garuḍa was bewildered, the Man dispelled darkness and became visible like the midday sun. Self-efflorescent men and women were waiting upon Him in thousands. The Man even went beyond and entered another fire. Garuḍa was once more bewildered but the God reassured him and said that only those who are steadfast in knowledge, detached, and free of egoistic feelings can know Him. A devotee would know only His gross aspect, that becomes the cause of universe. Then the God went even further and entered a lake full of swans asking Garuḍa also to follow. Garuḍa saw there

[1] XIII 3†D10 TG

thousands of *Agnihotras* and other sacrificial things and heard chanting of the four Vedas. Garuḍa was surrounded by innumerable other Garuḍas all very much superior to him. He prayed to God who assured him that he would go back to his people. The resplendent God appeared again and Garuḍa saw himself at Badarī from where he had started.

The God then explained the meaning of the vision to Garuḍa. The Lord has four aspects. One is Nirguṇa, the second is engaged in creation, the third protects, and the fourth destroys the universe. God visualized in its gross aspect is the cause of the effected world. His four aspects are Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, and Aniruddha, representing the soul, ego, mind, and intellect respectively. The four aspects can also be seen in another way as Hiraṇyagarbha that gave birth to Brahman, from whom Śiva was born and from Śiva came out Skanda.

God takes corporeal form when Dharma is oppressed by demons, titans, etc. Only those observing Vedic vows, wise, and of firm intellect and Yogins realize God and none else. Those under the influence of Rajas and Tamas cannot visualize god, their intellect being unsteady. Nor can He be visualized through fasts, vows and other privations.

Garuḍa had only a gross vision of God but that leads to the ultimate vision. Devotion is an important means.[1]

Gods and demons were fighting for sixty thousand years. Gods were defeated, so they approached the creator, who prayed to Viṣṇu and he promised through aerial speech to help them. During a fight between gods and demons, Viṣṇu appeared, riding his eagle with his weapons and destroying the demons, disappeared. Gods were surprised and asked the creator about their divine rescuer.[2]

Fast in honour of Viṣṇu is to be observed on the Dvādaśī day (whether of bright or dark half is not mentioned) of month. The year begins with Mārgaśīrṣa. The first twelve names of Viṣṇu beginning from Keśava and ending with Dāmodara are mentioned, each one in order particularly sacred for each month.[3] Viṣṇu incarnates himself whenever Dharma wanes and Adharma raises its head. His incarnations are the Fish, the Tortoise, the Boar, the

[1] XIII 3A†D10 S Lines 143-543
[2] ibid. LL 49-50
[3] XIII 12†V1 BDn D

Lion, the Dwarf, Hari, (?) Sādhya (?) Nārāyaṇa (?) son of Kaśyapa (?), Rāma (Bhārgava), Rāma (Dāśarathi), Rāma (Balarāma), Vāsudeva, the Yādava, and Kalki the future one.[1]

Everything animate or inanimate has been created by Viṣṇu. He is practising penance for the welfare of the universe. Others seek boons from this excellent deity.[2] Mention is made only of the Boar, Man lion, Dwarf, and Kṛṣṇa incarnations in Book III.[3] A Brahmin can cross the stream of transmigratory existence by worshipping Viṣṇu, who rescues those who have purified themselves by performance of duty and of austerities and also dispelled ignorance by knowledge.[4]

(iii) Śiva

Śiva is at present one of the two supreme gods of the modern Hinduism. He is identified with the Rudra of the Rgveda, a minor deity as such, and the Mahāyogin (or Paśupati) of the Mohanjodaro culture.

Though described in the superlative terms in the *Mahābhārata* especially in the *Anuśāsanaparvan* traces of his humble origin—or the scant regard with which some redactors regarded him—are visible in some versions, e.g., Sanatkumāra has passed beyond death, while Rudra, the son of God Brahman, the wielder of Śūla (lance), destroyer of three cities, Mahādeva, is still following the transient path. Sanatkumāra teaches Rudra the Sāṅkhya Philosophy mixed with *Yoga* and *Bhakti* elements.[5]

Though as a god he should have been supposed to be omnipotent, Śiva asks for half portion of the prowess of gods in order to be able to kill the three sons of the demon Tāraka. After getting this portion Śiva becomes the god of gods and the great god (Mahādeva).[6]

Śiva says to Umā that she has waited upon deities like Sāvitrī wife of Brahman, Śacī wife of Indra, Dhumorṇa wife of Bhadrā wife of Kubera, Gauri wife of Varuṇa, Suvarcalā, wife of the sun, Rohiṇī of the moon, Svāhā of Agni and Aditi of Kaśyapa and

[1] VII 1442*D6
[2] ibid.
[3] III 27†BD (except D1) G3
[4] XIII 615*T1-3 G1-4 M.
[5] XIII 11†D10S
[6] VIII 2†S (subst. for VIII 24. 62-84b)

asked them about the duties of a chaste woman.[1] However, Devanagari Composite 10 and Southern Recension make these ladies stay with and worship Umā.[2]

Kṛṣṇa is not only one of the most important characters of the *Mahābhārata* but he is also the Supreme God in the Epic. Attempt is made to place Śiva by his side on an equal footing. The *Mahābhārata* is adorned by the eminence of Śiva and Vāsudeva both.[3] Kṛṣṇa prostrates himself before Śiva.[4] Kṛṣṇa pervades the world through his devotion to Śiva. He has propitiated Śiva in every age. Only Kṛṣṇa can adequately describe the qualities of Śiva.[5]

Attempts have been made to bracket Śiva and Viṣṇu together giving equal prominence to both. Śiva and Viṣṇu are one body divided into two. All the gods and gaṇas are parts of Viṣṇu. The whole universe is pervaded by Viṣṇu. Brahman, Viṣṇu, and Maheśvara and everything else is the form of the Indestructible.[6]

Viṣṇu also is made to serve a purpose of Śiva. The chariot that Śiva was occupying while fighting against the sons of the demon Tāraka began to sink down, but Viṣṇu assuming the form of a bull pulled it up. Śiva took his stand on the head of the bull and back of the horse. (An earlier passage informs us that the four Vedas were made the horses of Śiva's Chariot.) Śiva cut the udders of horses and divided the hooves of the bull in two. Since then horses have no udders and bulls have their hooves divided in two.[7]

A group of myths was either created or collected round the god Śiva. Śiva has four faces because he, being fascinated by the beautiful damsel Tilottamā looked at her while she was going round him. His eastern face is always engaged in penance, the southern one destroys the universe, the western is attentive in looking after the needs of the universe, and the northern studies the Vedas eternally.[8]

The great sage Kaṇva was practising penance, until an anthill appeared on his head and a bamboo grew in the anthill. Kaṇva continued practising penance with all this on his head. When God

[1] XIII 134. 3-5
[2] XIII 15†D10S cv Lines 4415-16
[3] XII 5†T2
[4] VII 57.39
[5] XIII 73*N.
[6] VII 1440*ŚK (K5 missing) B Dc 1 Dn D 1-3.5.
[7] VIII 4†K3.4. V1 B (except B2) D (except D3) T2 Ca c.n
[8] XIII 15†D10S Lines 290-305

Brahman went and granted him his desired boon, he made two bows of the bamboo, one Pināka he gave to Śiva and the other, Śārṅga, was given to Viṣṇu. Out of the remaining part (shavings?) a third bow called Gāṇḍīva was fashioned which God Brahman bestowed on Soma.[1] It is not clear whether this Gāṇḍīva is supposed to be identical with the one that Arjuna received from the Fire God.

To begin with, the cows were all white in colour and very strong and powerful. Śiva was practising penance standing on one foot. The cows gathered round him and pushed him from one place to another many times. The god was highly incensed and in his wrath burnt the cows. A white bull then propitiated Śiva, but the cows became mild and variegated in colour since then. Śiva chose the white bull as his vehicle and emblem on the banner from that time onwards.[2]

Śiva wanted a clean and pure place to stay in; but he did not find any such place. He got angry with the creation and all sorts of calamities appeared. Ghosts and goblins began to wander about causing destruction. God Brahman knowing Śiva to be holding power to stop it, employed him for the task. Śiva also agreed out of compassion for the living beings. He settled ghosts and goblins in the cemetery and decided to stay there himself to keep them in check. Nothing is holier than the cemetery because human beings avoid it. One desirous of long life should not visit a cemetery at noon, at dawn or in the evening or in an impure state.[3]

Śiva destroyed the sacrifice of Dakṣa and unsettled the Gods who were offered oblations therein. The moon, though innocent, was crushed by Śiva with his toe, but she propitiated the angry god, who seeing that the moon was not guilty, repented and by way of expiation began to bear her on his head.[4]

The eleven Rudras are born of Śiva. Śiva assumes various forms.[5] Rays of the sun and the moon are Śiva's hair, so he is called Vyomakeśa (with hair spread in the sky). Kapi means the greatest and Vṛṣa means Dharma. So Śiva is called Vṛṣākapi. He controls and subdues Brahman, Indra, Varuṇa, Yama, and Kubera hence his name Hara. With his eyes closed he created the third eye on his

[1] ibid., Lines 322-36
[2] ibid., Lines 343-55
[3] ibid., Lines 367-95
[4] ibid., Lines 419-28
[5] XII 281*D10S (G3 missing)

forehead so he is called Tryakṣa and Bhava because everything past, present, and future owes its ascendancy to him.[1]

Śiva has two forms, one terrible, the other mild. Fire, lightning and the sun form his terrible form and water, stars, and the moon his mild form. The Vedāṅgas, Upaniṣads and philosophical systems too are his mild form.[2]

Natural state is twofold—hot and cold. The world is composed of these two elements—one of the moon and the other of fire. Viṣṇu has got the former. Śiva assumes the fiery form and sustains the world. If he were to assume the mild form, the balance of the universe would be disturbed.[3]

Brahman explains to Indra that the child in the lap of Umā was Śiva, the Lord of the whole universe. He had assumed a child's form for the sake of Pārvatī.[4]

Upamanyu's mother explains to him that Śiva is difficult to comprehend, difficult to visualise, difficult to please. He has many forms, right from those of the highest gods down to the insignificant insects, of birds, and beasts, Yakṣas and Rakṣasa's, gods and demons. He may assume many faces, many eyes, many heads, bellies, and feet. He is omnipresent, the inner soul of the universe, and resides in the hearts of all animals. He knows why anybody is worshipping him. He is happy, gets angry and also expresses approval, laughs, dances, sings, jumps, cries, sleeps, keeps awake, laughs with amusement when people are afraid of him, gives, and also accepts. He is seen on the altar, in the sacrificial column, in cowpens, in fire, as a child or a young man or an old one. He plays with the daughters and wives of sages and assumes many forms.[5]

Śiva created the science of statecraft and then other sciences like the eighteen lores. He composed all these sciences in brief as well as in detail.

Vyāsa became proficient in the Vedas through the grace of Śiva and Bhīṣma became so through the favour of Kṛṣṇa; Yājñavalkya through the favour of Śiva and Brahman.[6]

Indra obtained sovereignty over gods by worshipping Śiva.

[1] VII 1470*N (K5 missing)
[2] VII 1466*N (K5 missing)
[3] XIII 15†D10S Lines 404-411
[4] VII 1462*N (K5 missing)
[5] XIII 4†N
[6] XII 13†D7S (G3 missing)

Nārada also pleased Śiva and became unique in lustre, fame, and penance.[1] Śākalya became an author and also Sāvarṇi. Lavaṇa became indestructible, Bāṇa a compeer of Skanda, and even Rāvaṇa obtained power, through the grace of Śiva. Śiva also destroyed the pride of cupid and killed the God of Death.[2]

Kṛṣṇa becomes invincible because of a boon from Śiva. Kṛṣṇa also asks for eternal devotion to Śiva as a boon.[3]

Devotees of Śiva, even though householders, are similar to anchorites (hermits). Śiva when pleased with his devotees, grants the status of God Brahman or Viṣṇu or Indra or even sovereignty of the three worlds. One who worships Śiva, incurs no sin even if he kills everybody in the world. Śiva dispels every sin of his devotees who have nothing to fear, be they insects, birds or moths.[4]

A twice-born, desirous of long life should besmear himself with ashes so also the one who wants liberation or prosperity.[5] At the time of death, Śiva imparts in Vārāṇasī the rescuing knowledge to the beings by virtue of which they obtain final release.[6]

Those proficient in the Ṛgveda, the Yajurveda, and the Sāmaveda praise Śiva only as the indestructible, as being beyond darkness, and as being concealed in the world respectively.[7] He is fire, he is the sun.[8] Śiva is the support, the resort and the lord of the universe, the Supreme God.[9] A long list occurs of the appellations of Śiva where he is represented as being omniscient, beyond life, death, and old age, creator of the three worlds, the soul of the universe, the support of the three worlds etc..[10]

Brahman addresses a hymn to Śiva praising him as the shelter of the universe who has prevaded everything, the lord of the worlds and lord of what has been, and what will be.[11] To the ten lines in the text 14 lines are added to the hymn addressed to Śiva. In the added portion Brahman and Viṣṇu are said to be residing in Śiva.

[1] XIII 94*V1 B Dn D5.8
[2] XIII 95*D10 T2.3. G2.4. Madras edition
[3] XIII 183*V1 B4.5. Dn D5.8
[4] XIII 189*V1 BDn D5.8.10
[5] XIII 15†fn p. 935 G1.3.
[6] XIV 13*M3
[7] VII 414*D7.8
[8] VII 415*D7.8
[9] VII 416*TG3 M5
[10] VII 1444*ŚK (K5 missing) BDc1 Dn D1-3.5.6.
[11] VII 1465*N (K5 missing)

He is the progenitor and destroyer of the universe. He pervades the Universe. He grants heaven to his devotees and final beatitude to those who want it. He also rewards the Karmins with fruits thereof.[1] Devanagari Composite 7, Southern Recension describe Śiva as without beginning and without end, endowed with sentiency, etc., having mastery over the knowledge, to redeem and possesses eight *siddhis*. He sprung from the head of Brahman for his satisfaction and began to cry loudly and terribly. He gave wisdom to the creator and created the universe. He is Brahman and the grandfather of the worlds and the eternal soul of all beings.[2] Śiva is also the indestructible abode of innumerable Rudras.[3] Śiva is the God of gods, and the highest cause of the world.[4] Śiva in the form of knowledge, is the cause of Viṣṇu, Brahman, the moon, the sun, Indra, and other gods with their offsprings (?), He is the lord, the sentient agent, Puruṣa and cause (of the creation). He creates the universe and swallows it when it is engulfed in ignorance (Tamas). He is the only great God.[5]

Śambhū has pervaded the whole world through Yoga.[6] Śiva and Umā have pervaded the universe since all the living beings are marked by a symbol of either of them.[7]

In a hymn addressed to Śiva in some Northern versions.[8] Śiva is the root (Kūṭastha) of the whole world. Viṣṇu is the creator and Śiva the protector.[9] Bhīṣma expresses his inability to enumerate the names of Śiva, however, he goes on describing Śiva's greatness. Śiva is the creator of Brahman, Viṣṇu, and Indra, right from God Brahman down to ghosts, all the deities (?), the highest indestructible cause, existing and non-existing. Kṛṣṇa pervades the world through his devotion to Śiva. He has propitiated Śiva in every age. Only Kṛṣṇa can adequately describe the qualities of Śiva.[10]

[1] IX 237*TG
[2] XII 127*D-S
[3] ibid.
[4] XII 280*D7S (G3 missing) cv.
[4] XII 282*D7S (G3 missing)
[6] XII 1†D7S
[7] XIII 113*N
[9] XIII 6†V1 BDn D.
[9] XIII 15†D10S LL 264-266
[10] XIII 73*N

Śiva is the cause of the universe and fulfils all desires if worshipped through devotion.[1]

Śiva is extolled by Taṇḍi in the most glowing terms, calling him the Pradhāna Puruṣa, cause of the creation and destruction of the universe, unborn, beginningless, endless, etc.[2] Śiva is described as identical with many gods, sacrifice, penance, the five elements, etc.[3] A series of appellations of Śiva occurs in which he is said to be the supreme being, beyond Prakṛti, creator of the eternal seven worlds, all pervading, beginningless and endless.[4]

(III) OTHER MINOR DEITIES

Yudhiṣṭhira before entering the city of Virāṭa is made to propitiate Durgā.[5]

Arjuna addresses a hymn to Durgā at the suggestion of Kṛṣṇa. He calls her younger sister of Kṛṣṇa born in the family of Nanda, the mother of Skanda and addresses her as Caṇḍī, Bhadrakālī, Kātyāyanī, Vijayā, Jayā, Umā, Śākāmbharī, Sāvitrī, Kṛṣṇā, Mahadevī, etc. She blesses him from the sky to be victorious. A long *phalaśruti* follows.[6] Both of these hymns have been rejected by the Critical Edition. There is no other reference to Durgā in the Text.

Rudrāṇī, Śrī, Lakṣmī, are described as residing in the Hall of Brahman.[7] Śrī and Lakṣmī are mentioned as being present in the Hall of Indra also.[8]

The life of Kārtikeya is described in four lines and again in the next, gift of gold to Brahmins is recommended.[9] Names of Kārtikeya are given in a hymn of 40 lines, with a *phalaśruti*.[10]

Jarā explains to Bṛhadratha that in every house there lives a demoness (?) named the goddess of the house (Gṛhadevī) created by the Creator long ago. She is meant for destruction of demons.

[1] XIII 102*T2.3. G2.4.M.
[2] XIII 151*N.
[3] XIII 395*N (except D6.7. D3 missing).
[4] XIV 24*S.
[5] IV 4†(A) D2 (marg) (B) D6 (C) D5 (D) Dn D7.11.12 T2 (E) D3 (F) D6 (G) D9.
[6] VI 1 K2.4. BDa Dn D2 (Lines 1-7 only) 4.7.8.
[7] II 132* V1 BDS.
[8] II 7.4.
[9] XIII 401*N (D3 missing).
[10] III 22†K2 BDa Dn D3-6.

A person drawing her picture on the wall, youthful and with children will prosper, otherwise he will be ruined.[1]

(IV) SAMSKĀRAS, RITES AND RITUALS

The Southern redactors seem to be very particular about *Saṁskāras*. Duḥṣanta readily agrees with Śakuntalā's suggestion that their marriage should be properly solemnized because, "my lustrous son should not be bereft of rites".[2]

Vasudeva, at the request of Vṛṣṇis sends his priest to Pāṇḍu's abode so that the latter's sons may not be bereft of rites.[3]

Dhaumya appears with all preparation for consecration and Dhṛṣṭadyumna is duly consecrated as commander-in-chief of Pāṇḍava army.[4]

Even rituals must be properly performed whatever the offering. Viśvāmitra after taking away the dog's leg, cooks it and offers it to Indra, Agni, and the manes according to the proper ritual. In the Text he is described as taking it away to the forest.[5] It is further stated that Viśvāmitra did not taste himself the offering of the dog's leg but pleased gods and manes with it.[6]

[1] II 185*V1 BD.
[2] I 610*D4S.
[3] I 67†D4 (Supp. sec. m.) 5S.
[4] VI 155*M3-5.
[5] XII 357*K3-5 V1 BDa Dn1.3. D2.3.5.8.
[6] XII 358*KŚ V1 BDa Dn 1.3. D2.3.5.8.

CHAPTER NINE

PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT

(I) GENERAL PHILOSOPHICAL IDEAS

THE various compilers of the *Mahābhārata* desired it to come up as a sort of an encyclopaedia of all the available knowledge of the day.[1] As such we find in the Epic a compendium of philosophical systems current in the days of its composition. "It would appear that the redactors of the *Mokṣadharma* had sought to bring together, in one single section, different philosophical teachings and views, which had been sponsored by different teachers in different periods and which had gained some kind of recognition among influential circles of thinkers".[2] Consequently it is not possible to speak about the philosophy of the Epic as such.

(II) COSMOGONY AND COSMOLOGY

Many conflicting accounts of the creation of the universe are found in the additional portions. As examples the following may be cited:

There was nothing to start with, neither the fire nor elements nor stars, nor the sun, nor the moon, no Dharma and no Adharma, except the soul which though existing had no connection with the mind which was insentient. The God was sentient. (He created?) the sages named Viśvasṛj (Creators of the universe),—who getting sentiency from god and offering the sacrifice Viśvasṛj—created the Great grandfather (the creator God). He through the Favour of God started the creation. The sentiency belongs to the God, through it the world is sentient.[3]

[1] Cf. *Yadihāsti tadanyatra, yannehāsti na tat kvacit* I 56-83.

[2] V. M. Bedekar: Introduction to the *Mokṣadharama Parvan* of the *Mahābhārata BORI* Vol. 162 cc. XXXII.

[3] XII 1†D7S.

Keśava after creating Saṅkarsaṇa created Pradyumna from him, the enlightener of all lights. From him was born Aniruddha, lustrous and all powerful. The illustrious god, moving in ether took Yogic sleep and from him the gods Brahman, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara responsible for creation, sustenance and destruction were born.[1]

The aggregate qualities of the five elements merge into the body of the Bhūtātman and come out again. Without Him nobody can hear or see and there is no knowledge (consciousness). All these depend on Him *(Adhīna)* so they are called *Adhyātma*. Knowledge is really of one form but associated with many intellects. The *Bhūtātman,* after creation, absorbs everything at the time of universal destruction.[2]

The unthinkable and indestructible principle also appears in a different form, viz., Time. It does not have the qualities; and seasons like summer and winter are born of it.[3]

(III) DOCTRINE OF SOUL

Individual soul is ignorant and subject to pleasure and pain. It goes to heaven or hell as impelled by God. Impelled by *Karman,* individual souls get pleasure or pain. God has created the division of *Varṇa* and *Āśrama*. He created the whole world together with gods, demons and Gandharvas. Everybody dies or lives as the God pleases.[4] The soul has to experience the fruit of action done in the same body.[5] The soul does not do any act. It is the *Prakṛti,* endowed with the three *Guṇas* that does everything according to the *Guṇa* that is predominant.[6]

The soul is neither male nor female. It enjoys fruits of acts befitting a woman in a female body and of those befitting a man in a male body.[7]

The soul abandons the body only after the *Karman* (responsible for the body concerned) is exhausted. Otherwise, however tormented

1 XII 543*D7 T G1 6. M5.
2 XII 505 *Kumbhakonam edition.
3 XI 563*Kumbhakonam edition cv.
4 XII 1†D7S.
5 XII 461*K6.7. Dn1.4 Ds2, D2-6.8.9.
6 XIII†15 D10 S cv LL 2334-55.
7 ibid LL 2320-33.

the body is, the soul does not leave it.[1] The soul is tied like a bird between birth and death.[2]

(IV) KNOWLEDGE

Formerly people had memories of previous births and noticing that they get good or bad fruits of corresponding acts, they began to behave righteously. So within a short period the heaven was full of pious souls becoming gods. Then the God Brahman caused delusion among the mortals and also sent passion and wrath. Under their influence human beings began to behave sinfully and they went to hell instead of heaven. Seeing this, God Brahman struck the balance by making the other world discernible through knowledge and not through ordinary eyes.[3]

Knowledge springs from the unmanifest, intellect from knowledge, and mind from intellect. Intellect springs from *Ātman* and the unmanifest is said to be the same as knowledge. The five organs of knowledge spring from mind. The source of each is subtler than its evolute but nothing is subtler than *Ātman*. The organs of Knowledge together with the mind perceive all these(?).[4]

Direct perception, inference, analogy, verbal authority, presumption, legendary account, doubt, deduction, appearance, gesture, gait, movement, enunciation, logical reason, illustration, application, sentence, conclusion, the topic to be proved, purpose; these are the means of proof. Direct perception and inference are the source of all these. Only an intelligent person conversant with these means is competent to play politics.[5]

One knowing the twenty-five elements becomes similar to Buddha. *(Budhena samatāṁ gataḥ)*.[6]

(V) THE HIGHEST REALITY

There appears to be some concept of the Highest whom even the three great gods worship, for it is said, "Those, worshipping the

[1] XIII 15†9D10S cv LL 2356-67.
[2] VII 351*D2.
[3] XIII 15†D10S cv LL 2523-46.
[4] XII 539*Kumbh ed cv.
[5] XII 31*D7S.
[6] XIII 11†D10S L 416.

Great Lord, the God of gods, whom Viṣṇu, Indra, Śiva and Brahman praise with different hymns, go beyond calamities".[1]

(VI) THE KARMAN THEORY

Karman is supposed by later Indian thinkers to be without any beginning. But a Southern redactor undertakes to explain how it came into existence.

"To start with the creator made all human beings equal in every respect, but some of them brought themselves into difficulties through their own faults, so they approached the creator and exhorted him not to be partial since all beings were his children. The creator pointed out that they were themselves to blame for their predicaments. One enjoys fruit according to one's actions. As one sows, so he reaps."[2]

Everybody is born according to his *Karman* and dies also according to the same. Nobody can die before his time. Destiny is all powerful and impartial, nobody can change its course. (So one should not bother much about *Hiṁsā* since the victim is dying because of his own previous *Karman*. Butterflies and other insects jump on a lamp flame of their own accord, so also fish throw themselves into nets, birds and beasts also fall into the hands of the hunter whenever their time comes.)

The farmer tilling the field does not intend to kill small insects in the field, yet they die under the plough, and also under the farmer's feet but the farmer does not incur any sin.[3]

The same redactor tries to apply the *Karman* theory to certain specific cases, e.g., some people in spite of abundant wealth are not in a position to enjoy it because in their previous births they did good acts only when compelled by others to do so; but they were repenting of having done so. On the other hand, there are some people who have no riches; still they are fortunate enough to enjoy themselves. Such people in their previous births were very compassionate and pious even though in great difficulties. They however, desired to help the needy even when they had no money themselves.

[1] XII 259*D7S Cv.
[2] XIII 15†D10S cv LL 1574-87.
[3] ibid., LL 1045-1150.

Then again, there are some people who get status, wealth and prosperity without exerting themselves, others get what they want through their efforts and succeed in their undertakings.

The first type were worthy persons in their previous births. Guessing correctly needy persons went to them and they gave liberally. So they get everything in this birth without any effort. The second type gave only after they were importuned and prayed to again and again. The third type in their previous existence never gave anything though requested repeatedly.[1]

Some people get wealth and luxuries only in old age when they are not in a position to enjoy them. These people in their previous births became generous at the eleventh hour when the needy fell prey to diseases, so they get the fruits of their liberality in identical conditions.[2]

Some people in the midst of plenty and prosperity, are suffering from diseases and consequently are unable to enjoy pleasures. These had in previous birth shown liberality after being attacked by diseases.[3]

Those persons that are modest, of agreeable speech, sweet tempered, strictly vegetarian, compassionate and donate clothes, clean the ground, worship fire on purpose, have a beautiful personality in the next birth.[4] Again those persons who, in their previous births, being conceited of their beauty, made fun of ugly ones, harassed others, ate meat, were jealous and impure, were first severely punished in the world of Death and somehow were born here as ugly human beings.[5]

Some persons, though without attractive personalities and other things like wealth, are very popular with ladies because in the previous existence they were mild, of agreeable speech, satisfied with their wives and treated them as their equals and were impartial to them, were polite even to those wives whom they did not love, did not despise the ones who were not attractive, were loyal to their own wives and gave food and water and sweets to the indigent.[6]

On the other hand some persons though more fortunately placed

[1] ibid., LL 1625-37.
[2] ibid., LL 1645-51.
[3] ibid., LL 1655-57.
[4] ibid., LL 1662-69.
[5] ibid., LL 1680-91.
[6] ibid., LL 1692-1701.

are unpopular among women because they behaved in just the opposite manner in their previous births to the one described in the previous paragraph.[1]

Clever, intelligent persons working very hard have to face adversity if they were self-centered though learned in the previous births but stupid persons become prosperous if they have given liberally in their previous births without knowing what they were doing.[2]

Deities experience results of actions immediately with the very bodies with which they performed the act, while human beings experience it with another body and in another birth.[3]

"One gets the fruit of his action in the very birth during which the deed was done. Nobody gets anything without a corresponding action done previously.[4] Kṛṣṇa tells Jarāsandha that whatever a man does in whatsoever condition, in that very condition he gets the fruit thereof.[5]

Why should one worry about the fruit of *Karman*, matured by time?[6]

(VI) HAPPINESS AND MISERY

Persons with long lives have to undergo various miseries, some of which are: company of the undesirable persons, separation from dear ones, contact with the wicked, deaths of sons, wife, relatives and friends, and dependence on others. A man bereft of wealth is insulted. Members of low castes pass on as those of higher ones, good families are ruined. Persons of good families are insulted by those from bad ones. The rich insult the poor. People with trifling scholarship flourish, and intelligent and learned persons fall on evil days. Men in general have to suffer a good deal of misery and a person with longevity has to see and experience all these evils.[7]

Pleasures of human existence are as follows. No need to depend on bad friends, even though that means some difficulty; subsistence

[1] ibid., LL 1702-10.
[2] ibid., LL 1711-18.
[3] I 35†D3.4 (suppl. fol, sec. m.) TG Lines 32-35.
[4] XI 11†N (Ś2 D4 D8 missing).
[5] II 237*V1 BD cf. Manu 12.81.
[6] VII 308*D2.S.
[7] III 21†K2 4Dc Dn D1.2.3-4-6.

without anybody's help, however poor; food remaining after offering to guests and manes.[1]

A person who has no debt and who is not required to undertake a journey is happy though he has vegetables to eat every fifth or sixth day.[2] A man having control over his senses, free of greed and anger, contented, and truthful attains peace (i.e., comes out of the transmigratory existence).[3]

XII 540* repeats irrelevantly many lines occurring in earlier *Parvans* or later portions of the *Śānti,* advising that one should not think of misery that cannot be remedied. After all, desirable things in the world are transient and proportion of misery in the world is more than that of pleasure. One who goes beyond happiness and misery attains Brahman.[4]

[1] III 21†K2.4. Dc Dn D1-4.6. G3.
[2] III 32†Dn D6 D3.
[3] XI 23*K1-3, D1-9, Dn 1.2.
[4] XII 540*KŚ V1 Bo 6-9- Da 3.4 Dn 1-4 DS D2.3.5.6.8. C n.p.s.v.

CHAPTER TEN

AMPLIFICATIONS

THE original nucleus of the *Mahābhārata* came to assume the present gigantic shape with additions of some types other than discussed so far. The Epic came to be the means of entertainment and instruction at the same time, consequently the poetasters and teachers contributed their own mite in their own way. This extraneous matter will be studied in this chapter.

(I) EPIGRAMS

The fool who disregarding the words of his wellwishing friends acts according to his own sweet will, reaches a pitiable condition soon.

(VII 1091 BDc1 Dn2 D5).*

One who prepares himself in advance and one who can think of a remedy on the spur of the moment is happy, but the fatalist is ruined.—Pañcatantra 318, Hitopadeśa IV 5.

(XII 307 K3-5 V1BDa Dn 1.3 D2.3. 5.8. G 1.5).*

One repaying kindness abundantly is not equal to the one who had shown kindness first. The former simply returns obligations but the latter has been kind without any cause.

*(XII 310*KŚ VI Bo. 2-5 Da Dn1.3 D2.3.8).*

One should not place faith in an untrustworthy person nor should believe too much in a trustworthy one. One should create confidence in others but should not himself believe others.

*(XII 318*K4.5. V1 B Dn1. D3.7.9. S (G3 omits).*

Strangers cannot be won by even sharp weapons, but they can be won over by conciliation as elephants are won over by she elephants.

(XII 343 D7 T G2. 5.M).*

A wicked person should be kept at an arm's length, for how can he who does harm to himself (spiritually) be beneficial to others? Wicked and villaneous persons taking lives of animals are repulsive like serpents.

*(XII 361*K3.Ś V1 B Da Dn1.3 D2.3.8).*

One should win over a valiant person by humility, a coward by sowing dissension in his party, a greedy one by bribe and an equal by fighting.

*(XII 397*K3-5. V1 B Da Dn1.3. D2-5. 8).*

Those endowed with intellect are really strong. Those who have only physical strength are not supposed to be strong in the real sense.

*(XII 402*KŚ V1 B0-2.5 Da Dn 1.3 D2-4.8).*

Desire is the source of piety and prosperity. Without desire nobody would give away gifts, there would be no efforts. So desire is necessary before the three other ends of life.

*(XII 425*KŚ Dn 1.3. D2-4.8).*

A person taking bath in the *tīrtha* in the form of mind, knowledge as its pool *(Hrada)*, truth as its water that washes away impurity in the form of attachment and hatred, attains the highest destination.

(XIII 19 † D4-9).

A person possessing self-control may stay anywhere he pleases, there in that spot exist for him holy places like, Kurukṣetra, Naimiṣa, Puṣkara and Gayā.

(XIII 19 † D4-9).

Greediness is the birth place and sustenance of sin. It gives rise to anger, deceit and pride give rise to jealousy. Even those learned in all the scriptures, and able to dispel all doubts fall a prey to greed and go down.

(XIII 19 † D4-9).

The real holy baths *(Tīrtha)* are truth, forbearance, control of senses, compassion for all satisfaction, *Brahmacarya,* agreeable speech, knowledge, penance (Duty), but the highest *Tīrtha* is extreme purity of mind. A person with his limbs wet with *Tirtha* water is not supposed to have been bathed in a *Tirtha.* A wicked, greedy, cruel hypocritical and passionate person though bathed in all the holy baths, remains sinful and impure.

(XIII 19 † D4-9).

(II) POETIC EMBELLISHMENTS

Dhṛtarāṣṭra, lamenting outwardly after Vāraṇāvata fire, was happy in his heart like a big pool of water in summer, hot outwardly but cool inside.

*(I 1488*T1 G 1.2.4).*

Description of beautiful women presented by Kṛṣṇa to Pāṇḍavas as a marriage gift.

*(I 1937*T3 G2-7).*

Bhīṣma's wailings for Pāṇḍavas are pathetic but Vidura pacifies him by disclosing confidentially his scheme through which he had rescued them.

(I 86 † S).

Bhīma leaves for Baka's forest with quite a fanfare. The whole city of Ekacakrā comes to see him off. Realistic description of the tree near which Baka is accustomed to have his terrible feast.

(I 92 † D5S).

Bhīma and Jarāsandha fight with their heads like two rams, with trunks of trees like two demons, with feet like two horses and with their mouths like two *tittiri* birds.

*(II 247*S [except G4]).*

Yudhiṣṭhira laments in a very touching manner describing their valour and promising careers, when he sees his brothers stretched dead on the ground.[1] In the Text, he only heaves a deep sigh and

with eyes full of tears begins to think about the possible cause of their death.

([1]III 31 † BDc DÑ D2. 4-6G3; 2. III 297.3-9).

Description of Himālaya in the Kāvya style (7 lines) in keeping with style of the subsequent portion of the chapter.

*(III 787*K3 BD [except D1-3.5]).*

Description of lotus creepers.

*(III 793*N [except K4]).*

City of Kubera.

*(III 806*K3 BD [except D1-3.5]).*

Beautiful description of a pond.

*(III 1103*B 2.3 Dn D4.6 G3).*

Detailed description of Urvaśī's various limbs and charms bordering on obscenity as she goes to meet Arjuna.

(III 6 † K2-4, BDc Dn D1-6).

Poetic descriptions of Sairandhrī.

*(IV 200*K2 BDn D2 (marg sec.m) 5-7 9-12 IV 206*M).*

Irresistible charms of Sairandhrī.

*(IV 215*S).*

An inventory of the charms of Sairandhrī in the mouth of the courtiers of Virāṭa.

*(IV 333*S).*

Condition of Draupadī as she goes back to Sudeṣṇa after Kīcaka incident, 12 lines,[1] substituted for 4 in the original.[2]

*([1]. IV 338*S. [2]. IV 15, 36-37).*

Poetic description of the face of the weeping Draupadī.

*(IV 339*S).*

All MSS except K D1-3.7.9. insert a passage of 22 lines (Southern Recension substitutes a passage of six lines for line two) before IV 35.

1, describing the beauty of Uttarā and the affectionate way in which Arjuna receives her.

(IV 629).*

A metaphorical description of the river of blood created by Arjuna supplementing the Text.

*(IV 1005*N (6) 1007*S (4), 1009*S (5) 1010*T2 G2 (6)).*

The chariot of Kṛṣṇa that he occupies when on visit to Kauravas for negotiations.

(V 5 † S (T2 G2 omit some lines) K4 (omits lines 10-24) 24 lines).

Cosmic form of Kṛṣṇa; the netherworld was below his ankles, the sun and the moon his eyes, planets on all his sides, the upper worlds were his sides, rivers and oceans his perspiration, mountains his bones, trees his hair, day and night closing and opening of eyes and the Goddess of learning was on his tongue.

(V 494 D6).*

(III) THE EROTIC

Gaṅgā's coquettish ways of attracting Śantanu.

*(I 930*G [except G3-6] six lines).*

Too much erotic reference in Bharadvāja-Ghṛtācī incident.

*(I 1333*G1 1335*G1).*

Love making of Bhīma and Hidimbā, two lines bordering on the obscene.

(I 89 † D5S).

(IV) HUMOROUS TOUCHES

Dhṛtarāṣṭra's hypocritical lamentation for Paṅdavas.

(I 86 † fn T1 G1, 2, 4).

Bhīma decides to finish the food off because it would be scattered all over during the fight and he would not be able to eat it after the fight because by that time he would have touched the corpse of Baka.

(I 92 † D5 S).

Morsels of food in Bhīma's belly become one mass by the blows of Baka on his back.

(I 1649 G1.2.4).*

Bhīma made friends with the potter who gave him a huge earthen pot in which Bhīma used to bring plenty of alms. The people also were amused to find such a huge pot and laughingly put all sorts of food into it.

(I 1593 T2 GM6-8).*

When Durvāsas pays a visit to Pāṇḍavas and they find it impossible to entertain him along with his ten thousand pupils, Yudhiṣṭhira exclaims, "Mighty Bhīma, bring fuel and burn me down". Bhīma actually fetches fuel uttering, "Help, help. O Govinda".

(III 25† p. 1082 fn Dc, Dn2).

A wife with a single husband has to lead a miserable life. Draupadī with five husbands has no limit to her share.

(IV 386 T2 G2).*

Draupadī promises Kīcaka such happiness as he has never experienced before.

(IV 418 T G2).*

People run away from Draupadī closing their eyes with hands.

(IV 482 T1).*

Arjuna buries an arrow into the head of Bhīṣma and loudly asks the Kauravas to mark the wonderful horn of the old man, that he secured for the sake of his (grand) children.

(IV 1028 K2 D 1.2.4.5.9 and IV 1029* D4).*

To enquire about the Nakṣatra after having a shave.

(VI 454 D7.S).*

Arjuna taunts Śakuni, "You deceitful gambler, my bow does not throw dice but sharp and burning arrows".

(VII 230 S).*

Prominent leaders of Kaurava army run away through fright.
(1. VIII 44 † K4 V1 BD [except D2.8] T1-2 GM 1-4).

(V) EXAGGERATIONS

Jarāsandha whirls his mace ninety-nine times and hurls it at Mathurā from Girivraja at a distance of ninety-nine yojanas and it hits the mark!

(II 197 VI BDS).*

The noise of the shrieks of the monkey on Arjuna's banner was resounding in the ten quarters and the monkey frightened the enemy by knitting eyebrows and waving the tail.

(VI 74 D3).*

The big chief of monkeys shouting on the banner of Arjuna with his ears erect frightens the enemies.

(1. VI 184 D1).*

The monkey on the banner of Arjuna shrieks and waves its tail, by the noise of which the sky, as it were, is broken.

(1. VI 451 D1).*

(VI) THE MIRACULOUS ELEMENT

At the time of the birth of Śakuntalā's son, flowers were showered from the sky, divine drums were beaten, nymphs began to dance and good luck was forecast for Śakuntalā's son by Indra himself.

(I 624 D4 [marg. sec.m.] S).*

Śakuntalā's anger was visible as a flame of fire with smoke but she controlled it and contained it in her body.

(1. I 671 D4S).*

No sooner was Bhīma born, then all the kings in the world started urinating (through fear), their vehicles were broken and tears began to flow from their eyes.

*(1. I 1207*S).*

When Duryodhana was born he brayed like a donkey and donkeys

brayed and foxes howled and crows croaked in return, there were storms and all the quarters began to burn.

*(I 1142*N [except Ś1 K1.2]).*

No sooner was Duryodhana born than in all directions wild beasts began to howl, there was a rain of blood.

(1. I 1143 S).*

The messengers who professes to have come from Vidura, was in fact, sent by Indra in the interests of the Pāṇḍavas. By eating the earth he prepared a tunnel within ten days and went to Indra to report and came back.

(I 1472 K4 [marg]).*

Kṛṣṇa, through Indra, procures the services of Viśvakarman for building the new capital for Pāṇḍavas whereas in the Constituted Text the new capital is constructed purely through human effort.

(1. I 1987 D4 [marg. sec. m] S I 199. 27-28).*

Devanagari Composite makes the swans, one of whom Nala and Damayantī catch, gods and Gandharvas, in fact, cursed by Indra for some reason.

(III 212 D1).*

Aṣṭāvakra enters the river Samaṅgā and then becomes straight.

*(III 662*K 1.2 BD [except D1 2.5, D3 marg]).*

When the demon Mahiṣa fell at the hands of Skanda, his head closed an opening (in some mountain) sixteen *Yojanas* in length; so it could not be crossed, but residents of Uttara Kurus can go through that pass comfortably.

*(III 1088*K2 BD [except D 1-3] G3).*

Missiles, when prayed to by Arjuna, appear in person before him. Arjuna tells them to assume a mental form.

*(IV 764*N [D. missing]).*

The Vaijayantī garland into which Bhāgadatta's missile was transformed.

(VII 213 K2 Dn2 D4, 6-8 S).*

A pond that Arjuna creates with his arrows complete with aquatic birds and animals, lotus plants, sages, etc. In the Text there is a simple pond for horses to drink water from.

(VII 538 BDC 1 Dn S-8).*

Divine sages, Gandharvas, Nāgas, Yakṣas, Kinneras held and even presiding deities of the quarters sent lamps with fragrant oil so that Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas could fight at night.

*(VII 1165*K4 Dn2 D1-5.7.8).*

The sage declares his own power through which even gods are discharging their duties.

*(XII 274*D7S [G3 missing]).*

(VII) ELUCIDATIONS

Kashmiri 2.4 add a line enumerating the seven limbs of body politic, the Text simply states the number.

(XII 124).*

Enumeration of the five nailed animals that one can eat. In the Text only the rule that five nailed animals may be eaten is stated.

(XII 354 D7 [marg. sec. m]).*

Malayali 1.6.7. give a list of the eight Vasus after XII 201.18 where only their number is referred.

(XII 549).*

Defintion of a Kāṇḍapṛṣṭha.

*(XIII 253*T1).*

(VIII) ETYMOLOGY

Fire is called Agni (1) because it was created *(nirmita)* by God before *(agre)* the whole creation, (2) because of all rites, offering is first *(agre)* made *(diyate)* to it, (3) because it leads *(nayati)* the Brahmins to the best *(agryam)* course.

*(XIV 4*Ś1 LL 2563-2568).*

Vṛṣa means Dharma; one who destroys it *(layaṁ kurute)* is called a Vṛṣala.

(XIV 4 TGM2-4 LL 3227-38).

(IX) PARAPHRASE, SUBSTITUTION AND EXPANSION

The story of the Jatugṛha episode is told in brief in 38 lines.

(I 81 † K4ÑV1 BDT1).

For IV 4.10-43 Southern Recension substitutes passages of 120 lines in which Dhaumya instructs the Pāṇḍavas how one should behave in the royal presence, ; only 29 lines are common with the Northern Recension.

*(1. IV 120*S).*

Pāṇḍavas pretend that the corpse that they tie over the hollow of the tree is that of their mother and that is their family tradition and then they enter the city of Virāṭa. The Constituted Text takes only 10 lines to describe this whereas Southern Recension takes 38 lines for the same.

*(IV 175*S).*

Southern Recension substitutes a passage of 164 lines to describe Yudhiṣṭhira's meeting with Virāṭa and their conversation[1] for which the Constituted Text takes only 56 lines.[2]

*([1] IV 108*S, [2] IV 6.2-15).*

Southern Recension adds 60 lines to describe the meeting of Virāṭa and Bhīma and substitutes 8 lines.

(1. IV 183 185* 187* 190* 192* 193* 2. IV 184* 188* 189*).*

A passage of 24 lines in Triṣṭubh meter is substituted for IV 10.5.7 also in Triṣṭubh amplifying the latter describing the meeting of Virāṭa and Arjuna.

*(IV 234*S).*

Southern Recension substitutes a passage of 32 lines[1] for the one of 16 lines[2] in the Constituted Text reporting the address of Kīcaka to Draupadī.

([1] IV 267 [2] IV 13. 6-9).*

S substitutes a passage of 26 lines[1] for eight in the Constituted Text[2] in which Draupadī impresses on Kīcaka's mind how dangerous his infatuation for herself is.

([1] IV 280 [2] IV 13. 20-21).*

Amplification of IV 8.28 cd. in nine lines to describe how the Gandharvas would punish an offender against Sairandhrī.

*(IV 219*S).*

A passage in S of 15 lines[1] for two lines[2] in the Text telling what transpired between Kīcaka and Sudeṣṇā about Sairandhrī.

([1] IV 289 [2] IV 14.9).*

N (with certain lines omitted in some versions) inserts a passage of 12 lines in Triṣṭubh meter equivalent in sense to IV 15.6.

(IV 307).*

At Arjuna's desire Draupadī goes and recommends him to Uttarā as a charioteer. 15 lines substituted for two in the Text.

*(IV 623*S).*

For IV 50.4-23 S substitutes a passage of 46 lines of which 14½ lines bear verbal similarities with the Text. The purpose of both the passages is the same, viz., Arjuna describing warriors from Kaurava army to Uttarā.

*(IV 910*S).*

S substitutes an entire Chapter of 44 lines for the one in the Text (34 lines). Both the Recensions give names of gods and departed kings that had gathered to watch the battle between Arjuna and the Kaurava warriors.

*(IV 917*S).*

S (except Malayali 3) adds two lines after VI 22.13 paraphrasing this same.

(VI 83).*

Devanāgarī Composite 1 adds *Kaṭhopaniṣad* 1.2.15 to Maithili 30.H conveying the same sense.

(IV 98).*

Paraphrase of VI 33.26 in six lines is given by Ś1-3-5 K6 D3 Ck.
(IV 103).*

"We are ready to kill in war Bhīṣma for kingdom, in whose lap we used to play during childhood, who brought us up and who taught us the use of missiles in the proper way", says Yudhiṣṭhira to Kṛṣṇa". This is expansion of one line (viz. V1 103 48 cd).
*(V 424*D1).*

The essence of the Gītā is—One devoted to Hari is easily free of bondage by knowledge of the self through His grace.
*(VIII*Ñ).*

Irāvat meets Arjuna and offers his services. Repetition of VI 86. 11-14.

*(VI 334*S).*

Arjuna severs the head of Jayadratha, the sun appears and Arjuna asks Kṛṣṇa why he should not let it fall on the ground. Repetition of substance in VII 121.

*(VII 1022*S).*

Balarāma visits all the *Tirthas*, takes baths and performs all the rituals and goes eastward. Seven lines substituted for 6½. Substance is the same.

*(IX 224*BDn D1-6-10).*

At the mention of the three ends of human life, Devanāgarī Composite 7 and S go on adding more groups of three; the three kinds of power, viz., that of counsel, person and vigour; the Agent, the Act and the Means (or the purpose); *Sattva, Rajas* and *Tamas*. Then discussion of the nature of *Mokṣa* is irrelevantly introduced, the only connection being that one going beyond *Sattva, Rajas* and *Tamas* is liberated and (paradoxically enough) then it is said that the Creator bent on Liberation laid down the protection of the three ends of human life because the maintenance of the universe is dependent upon the three ends.

*(XII 166*D7S).*

The owl and the ichneumon are surprised to find the friendship

of the mouse and the cat and return home disappointed. Six lines added carrying substance of XII 126.82.

*(XII 311*K4.5 V 1 Bo 2.5 Da Dn1. 3 D2.3.8).*

A passage of 31 lines is substituted by Devanagari 7, Telugu and Grantha 1.2.5. Malayali for XII 166.11 cd to 25. The substance of both the passages is the same.

(XII 446).*

A passage of 43 lines is substituted by Devanagari Composite 7 and (Grantha 3.4 absent) for XII 167.1-2.1 substantially agreeing with the latter. Some verses are found verbatim in both the passages.

(XII 449).*

Kashmiri 4-6-7 VI Bo 6-9 Da 3.4. Devanagari Composite 2.3.5.8 add a passage of 12 lines to explain XII 172.61 in which Bodhya mentions his six *Gurus*, viz., the Prostitute Piṅgalā, the *Kurara* bird, the serpent, the *Sāraṅgas*, the maker of arrows, and a maiden.

(XII 475).*

Fire disappears from the sacrifice of Duryodhana, father of Sudarśanā; the king requests Brāhmaṇas to find the reason and they begin to propitiate the god. 13 lines substituted for nine in the Text.

*(XIII 23*S).*

N (Devanagari Composite 3 missing) inserts a passage of nine lines which paraphrases and repeats the substance of XIII 83.43-45.

(XIII 390).*

(X) QUOTATIONS

A verse from the Veṇīsaṁhāra (III 37) has been incorporated.

(VI 1360 BDC1 Dn D2.5.6).*

A passage is quoted from the Nārada Purāṇa.

(1. XIV 4† TGM2-4 1L 2935).

(XI) DETAILS

(i) Battles

Battle between Bhīma and Hidimba.

(I 153 G1.2.4 T1 14 lines. I. 1538* TG1.6. [with a few lines omitted] 12 lines).*

Mangled head and body of Hidimba.

*(I 1550*TG).*

Fight of Bhīma and Baka in 37 lines whereas in the Constituted Text 26 lines are given to it. Various Grantha Manuscripts add 20 more lines.

*(I 93*TG.)*

Battle between King Viśvāmitra and sage Vasiṣṭha.

(I 97†D4 [marg. sec. m.] T1, 2G [except G3]).

Pāṇḍavas fight with the kings assembled for Draupadī's svayaṁvara (24 lines).

(I 99†T1.2 G1.3-6 D4 (marg. sec. m).

Detailed description of the wrestling of Bhīma and Jarāsandha in 19 lines.

(II 17†·KI V1BD, G3).

Detailed description of the conquests of Arjuna[1]; of Sahadeva[2].

([1] II 12†T1G1-6 M[2]. II 13†V1B (B marg, Dn. D.1-6 T1.M).

Battle between Śiśupāla and Kṛṣṇa.

(II 28†S LL 114-214).

The havoc that Arjuna works on the armies of Jayadratha when the latter tries to abduct Draupadī.

(III 26†T1 [16 lines]).

S describes the wrestling match between Bhīma and a wrestler in four lines.

(IV 253).*

Wrestling of Bhīma and Kīcaka.
*(IV 447*TG).*

Arjuna shoots an arrow.
(IV)

Bhīmā's harangue to Suśarman fleeing the battlefield.
*(IV 599*N).*

Yudhiṣṭhira and his brother (except Arjuna) get ready to fight.
*(IV 565*S).*

Yudhiṣṭhira and his brothers form parts of Virāṭa army and kill thousands of enemy soldiers.
*(IV 579*S).*

Bhīma strangles Suśarman.
*(IV 604*N).*

Arjuna attacks Karṇa whose sons and brothers hurry to protect him against Arjuna.
*(IV 908*S).*

Battles raging.
*(IV 922*S (9) 934*S (9) 937*N (S[1] missing B2 D 3.4. omitting a few lines) (4) 947*S (3) 949*S (2) 950*S (3) 951*S (4) 948*N (Ś missing) (4) 986*D4.7 (14) etc. give minute details about the battle between Arjuna and various Kaurava warriors. So also 992*K2 (13) 997*M 1.4.5 (10) 998*T2 G2 (5) 1013*M1 (7).*

The Kaurava and Pāṇḍava armies are transfixed at the sight of each other like the streams of Gaṅgā and Yamunā at confluence. They appear as it were drawn on a canvass.
*(VI 116*S).*

Battle between Satyajit and Droṇa. (10 lines added).
*(VI 146*N)*

Various Pāṇḍava warriors discharge arrows at Droṇa. 6 lines added.[1] 12 lines added.[2]
*([1]. VII 153*N [S missing] [2] 155*S [except G4]).*

Bhīma playing havoc.

*(VI 147*S).*

Arjuna playing havoc.

*(VI 162*S).*

Bhīma destroys the army of Kaliṅga, smashing elephants with elephants, chariots with chariots, horses with horses, and foot soldiers with foot soldiers.

*(VI 174*D1 169*T1. G4).*

Sātyaki and Bhīma fighting bravely.

*(VI 181*D1 183*D1).*

Battle raging.

*(VI 185*D1 [4 lines] 186*S [four lines]).*

Description of general massacre.

*(VI 190*Da Dn1 DŚ).*

Bhīmasena's valour

*(VI 234*K5. 235*D1 237*D1).*

Bhīma smashes with his mace the Kauravas and the mace is covered with marrow, fat, flesh and blood.

*(VI 239*D4).*

Battle raging. Six lines.

*(VI 275*N [Ko-4 om two lines]).*

Heaps of heads, bows, maces, iron clubs, hands, feet, legs, amulets etc., in the fight between Bhīṣma and Bhīma.

*(VI. 276*N).*

Description of the terrible river of blood.

*(1. VI 278*S).*

Bhīma kills with his mace huge elephants, smashes chariots together with archers in the same, horses, riders, etc. He fights alone

with many opponents and is like the God of Death destroying the creation at the time of Universal Destruction.

*(VI 296*D4S).*

Goblins dancing delighted by drinking blood of headless trunks dancing with bows and lances in hands.

*(VI 334*D1).*

Flight of the army of Suśarman when attacked by Arjuna.

*(VI 399*S [T2 om lines 2-5]).*

Fight between Bhīṣma and Arjuna.

*(VI 411*D3.6).*

Bhīma fights bravely and meets missiles discharged by Droṇa, Hārdikya, and Jayadratha.

*(VI 459*M).*

Sātyaki fights with Yavanas and Kāmbojas and covers the battlefield with their arms cut away. Eight lines added.

*(VI 675*S).*

Droṇa orders his charioteer to drive the chariot towards Yudhiṣṭhira, since he wants to hold back the army of Kauravas. Only Arjuna and Dhṛṣṭadyumna can stand him. 20 lines added.

(VII 4†S).

Banners of various warriors from both the armies.

(VII 5†N [Ś2 missing] TG3).

Battle between Karṇa and Abhimanyu who defeats the former and reminds him of his wicked deeds, especially the disrobing of Draupadī. 24 lines added.

(VII 6†K2 [marg]).

Battle between Ghatotkaca and Alambuṣa 50 lines added.[1] 46 lines added.[2]

([1]. VII 9†S[2]. 2VII 10†S).

Battle between Bhīma and Karṇa aided by Duḥśala. 25 lines added.

(VII 11†TG2-S).

Battle between Bhīma and Karṇa. 18 lines added.

(VII 12†BD1 DS).

Arjuna massacres the Kaurava army. 71 lines added.

(VII 15†BDc1 Dn1 D3).

Battlefield covered with heads, turbans, headgears, armlets etc., shines like the sporting ground of Rudra.

(VII 15†BDc1 Dn1 D3 LL 49-52).

The battlefield as a river.

(VII 15†BDc1 Dn1 D3 LL 53-66).

Arjuna destroys the army protecting Jayadratha, 35 lines added.

(VII 16†K4 BDc1 Dn D1-3.5).

Kṛṣṇa describes to Arjuna how he has completely routed the Kaurava army that was protecting Jayadratha.

(VII 17†B1-5 Dc1 Dn1 DS).

Duryodhana rushes into the army of Paṇḍavas. Dhṛtarāṣṭra hopes that he did not show his back.

(VII 19†S).

Droṇa attacks Sātyaki. Pāṇḍava warriors rush to defend him. Droṇa turns them back. Arjuna and Bhīma then attack Droṇa and other warriors also follow them. 50 lines added.

(VII 20†K4 BDc1 Dn D1.S).

Havoc wrought by the Nārāyaṇa missile. 36 lines.

(VII 21†G1 M1. 2).

Battle between Aśvatthāman and Dhṛṣṭadyumna and later with Sātyaki. 56 lines added.

(VII 22†D6).

Sātyaki fights with Aśvatthāman and defeats him again and again and also Kaurava warriors like Duryodhana, Kṛpā, Karṇa, Kṛtavarman, Duḥśāsana and Vṛṣasena.

(VII 23†K4 Dn2 D1.5T).

Fight between Aśvatthāman and Bhīma in which Bhīma proves more than a match for his opponent. 86 lines added.

(VII 24†K 4 BDc1 Dn D15. 6 T1).

Battle between Bhagadatta and Drupada. 5 lines.

*(VII 105*N [Ś missing]).*

Battle between Ghatotkaca and Alambuṣa : Eight lines added.

*(1. VII 106*S).*

Various warriors attacking and counter-attacking each other.

*(VII 184*D6 (Six lines) 185*M3-5 (Nine lines) 186*TG3 M3-8 (Ten lines).*

Bhīma fights and vanquishes an elephant (14 lines).

*(VII 189*K2 (marg) 4.5. Dn. D1-8).*

Arjuna attacks Bhagadatta (Eight lines).

*(VII 220*K2 [marg] D4. 7-8).*

Bhagadatta, killed and fallen on the ground (11 lines).

*(VII 228*K2 [marg] D 5.7).*

Abhimanyu addresses Duḥśāsana reminding him of his villainy. 11 lines added to the Text conveying the same sense.

*(VII 283*K2).*

Battle between Karṇa and Abhimanyu. Nine lines added to the text[1]. Five lines added to the text.[2]

*([1]VII 291*K2 [2] VII 292*N (Ś missing).*

Jayadratha fighting the Pāṇḍavas. Five lines added to the Text.

*(VII 304*G1 M).*

Battle between Abhimanyu and Lakṣmaṇa. 10 lines added to the Text.

*(VII 315*K2).*

Arjuna pursues Duḥśāsana and pierces him with many arrows. 6 lines added to the original.

*(VII 476*S).*

Arjuna is not a match for Droṇa.

*(VII 478*S).*

The river of blood metaphorically described with all its paraphernalia like sands, trees, boulders, alligators, mud, etc.

*(VII 496*S).*

Battle between Droṇa and Sātyaki. Six lines added to the Text.

*(VII 521*BDc1 D5).*

Arjuna holds the whole army of Kauravas single handed.

*(VII 540*S).*

Horses of Arjuna's chariot.

*(VII 546*B5).*

The sound of Kṛṣṇa's conch bursting the world.

*(VII 553*S).*

Alambuṣa showers arrows, javelins, spears, swords, boulders and other weapons from the sky.

*(VII 562*B1-5 Dc1 DS).*

Alambuṣa while falling down crushes ten chariots and ten elephants.

*(VII 572*G1 M 1.2.5).*

Ghatotkaca goes and reports to Yudhiṣṭhira his killing of Alambuṣa and Yudhiṣṭhira congratulates him. Six lines added.

*(VII 574*S).*

Bhīma and Sātyaki enter the formation of Kaurava army. Seven lines added.

(VII 596 K4 B (B4 missing) Dc1 D1.5S).*

Sātyaki works havoc on Kaurava army. 7 lines added.

(VII 601 BDv1 Dn2 cd).*

Sātyaki asks his charioteer to drive the chariot towards Kṛtavarman.

*(VII 627*Dn1).*

The elephant division runs away bleeding urinating and discharging faeces through fright of Sātyaki.

(VII 632 K4 BDc, D1).*

A long list of warriors and armies that Sātyaki defeated. 11 lines.

*(VII 661*S).*

The battlefield is covered by the corpses of Yavanas, Kambojas, Kirātas, Barbaras killed by Sātyaki. Four lines added.

(VII 674 K4 B1-4 Dc1 D1).*

The Yavanas discharge arrows at Sātyaki saying 'Ke Be (?)' (Kyon Be?)

*(VII 673*DS).*

Battle between Sātyaki and Yavanas. 14 lines added.

*(VII 698*S).*

Sātyaki kills elephants.

*(VI 699*S).*

Droṇa works havoc on Pāṇḍava army. Five lines added.

*(VII 709*K4 BDc. D1).*

Battle between Duḥśāsana and Sātyaki. 13 lines added.

*(VII 717*K4 BDc1 D1).*

Terrible noise of the battle.

*(VII 729*S [Four lines] 730*K4 BDc1 Dn2 D1 3.5.6 TG1-5 M1-5).*

Yudhiṣṭhira expresses concern over Arjuna's safety and mentions his qualities. Six lines added.

*(VII 760*S).*

Battle between Bhīma and Karṇa. 5 lines added.

*(VII 802*K4.5 BD).*

Battle between Yudhāmanyu and Duryodhana. Six lines added.

*(VII 818*N).*

Six Mahārathas had surrounded Jayadratha in order to protect him from Arjuna and it was impossible to reach him without defeating them. So Kṛṣṇa plays a trick and creates darkness through his Yoga. Kauravas think that the sun has set and that Arjuna will end his own life. Kṛṣṇa points Jayadratha to Arjuna who has to fight with the six protectors. Arjuna puts them to flight after some hard fighting. 85 lines added.

(VII 16†K4 BDc1 Dn D1-3.5).

Battle between Yudhāmanyu and Uttamaujas on the one hand and Duryodhana on the other. Eight lines added.

*(VII 819*S).*

Karṇa vanquished by Bhīmasena. Three lines.[1] Four lines.[2] Paraphrase of the text.

*([1] VII 840*K4 Dn2 D1.3.6. [2] VII 841*D2).*

Battle between Bhīma and Karṇa. Nine lines added.[1] Four lines added.[2]

*([1] VII 846*M1.3.5. [2] Bom. ed).*

The same. Eight lines[1] substituted for VII 111.27.29. Eight lines added.[2]

*([1] VII 875*BDc1 [2] VII 900*Dn1 D2.S).*

An earing of Karṇa falls down while fighting with Bhīmasena. Paraphrase of VII 114. Four lines added.

(VII 895 D5).*

Battle between Bhīma and Karṇa. Three lines added.[1] Eight lines added.[2]

*([1] VII 907*G1 M. [2] VII 909*D.S).*

Battle between Bhūriśravas and Sātyaki. Eight lines added.

*(VII 940*S).*

Various tricks of swordfights,[1] other tricks of combat.[2]

*([1] VII 941*BDc1 D3. 6 [2] VII 942*BDc1 D2.3.5.6).*

Hearing the twang of Arjuna's bow, the army of Duryodhana becomes like the ocean perturbed by the wind at the time of the universal destruction.

(VII 1003 BDc1 Dn D3.5).*

Arjuna kills everybody that comes forward to oppose him and pierces Aśvatthāman, Kṛpā, Śalya, Karṇa and other Kaurava heroes. 12 lines added to three lines in the Text.

*(VII 1006*BDc1 D3).*

Arjuna severs the head of Jayadratha and withdraws the missile Pāśupata. 18 lines added.

*(VII 1026*S).*

Dhṛtarāṣṭra expresses surprise that Jayadratha was killed under the nose of the Kaurava warriors.

*(VII 1033*S).*

Battle between Karṇa and Sātyaki. Five lines added.

*(VII 1051*TG1-5 M1.2.5).*

Yudhiṣṭhira expresses delight at the safe return of Bhīma and Sātyaki from the battlefield.

*(VI 1086*N).*

Duryodhana's condition after Jayadratha was killed. 5 lines added.

*(VII 1087*BDc1 Dn D5).*

Duryodhana refers to the massacre carried on by Arjuna and wonders how this could be done unless Droṇa was lenient. 4 lines added.[1] 8 lines added.[2]

*([1] VII 1096*BDc1, [2] 1097*S).*

Battle between Duryodhana and Yudhiṣṭhira. 16 lines added.

*(VII 1103*BDc1 Dn1 D3.5.6).*

Druma, a brother of Karṇa is reduced to pulp when Bhīma strikes him with his fist just as a nugget of glass is reduced to powder.

*(VII 1117*S).*

Bhīma kills the ten sons of Bāhlīka. Their names are given. Six lines.

*(VII 1135*ŚK [K5 missing] B1.2.3 [marg] D [except D5]).*

Sahadeva flings all sorts of things at Karṇa including dead men, limbs of elephants, dead horses, yokes, etc.

*(VII 1178*Dn2 D2.5.7.8).*

Battle between Alambuṣa and Arjuna. 5 lines added.

*(VII 1180*M4).*

Battle between Drupada and Vṛṣasena in which Drupada is defeated. 10 lines added.

(VII 1182 Dn2 D2.3.5.8).*

Heads of warriors falling on the battlefield.

*(VII 1194*BDc Dn).*

Dhṛṣṭadyumna attacks Karṇa and the Somaka and Pāñcāla armies also.

*(VII 1202*D2.4.5. 7.8. Dn2).*

Kṛṣṇa tells Yudhiṣṭhira that Arjuna has killed Jayadratha. An attempt to fill a lacuna in the Text. 5 lines.

*(VII 1978*BDc, Dn DS).*

Battle between Sātyaki and Duryodhana. 5 lines added.
*(VII 1299*N [S2 K5 missing]).*

Rival groups surround Sātyaki and fight for or against him. 12 lines added.
*(VII 1317*N [ŚK5 missing]).*

Kauravas attack Arjuna. 8 lines added.
*(VII 1318*G1 M1.2).*

Dhṛṣṭadyumna runs towards Droṇa with a sword and shield. Pāṇḍavas shout their disapproval and Arjuna jumping from his chariot runs after him. Six lines added repeating the substance of VII 165.46 ab. (1336*G1M1.2).

Battle raging.
*(VII 1341*G1 M1.2).*

Both the armies attack each other.10 lines added.
*(VII 1393*G1M).*

Tumult of the battle. Five lines.[1] Four lines.[2]
*([1] VII 1394*S (G2.5. missing) [2] 1396* G1M1.2).*

Aśvatthāman's missile flies to Arjuna. 4 lines added.
*(VII 1419*N [KŚ missing]).*

Aśvatthāman works havoc on Pāṇḍava army. 10 lines added.
*(VII 1421*6).*

Arjuna covers all quarters with his arrows.
*(VII 1423*D2. 4-6).*

A battle between Śrutakrīti and Śalya in which the former is beaten and the latter works havoc in the army of Pāṇḍavas and Pāñcālas. 42 lines.
(VII 1† T1-3, G1-3, M1-4).

The havoc that Arjuna is working on the army of the Kauravas, described by Śalya to Karṇa. 21 lines.
(VIII 7 ŚK1-4, V, BDT2 Ccn).

The battles raging.[1]

(VII 6†S, 9†V1 BDS 10†S. 12TK4 V1 Bo (except D) S Ca. can).
(1. VIII 13 T, G, 14 N c a c n TG).
(15 TG. 16 Nca).
(Dn1 D1 3-8 Ca. c. 27 D6 T1-3GM).
(34 NT2 C a e).
(1. VIII 34 N T2 cac 35 K4 Dni D4 (marg) 6-8. 39 K4 B2. 4.5. Dn, D1.2.5.6.8. V1 Da, T1.2. 41 S K1-4 D1-8 V1 B Da, Dn, T2 C a c 42 K4 V, BD (except D2.8) T2, 43 K4, V, B Da, Dn, D1 3.5,7).

Bhīmasena kills Duḥśāsana and fulfills his vow. A repetition of the text.

*(VIII 28*ŚD6 29†Dn, 30 G1-3 T1.3 T1, 2: M 31†K4V1 BD (except D2.8) 32 K4 D2 T2 33 NT2).*

Kṛṣṇa describes Karṇa's chariot to Arjuna and tries to enthuse confidence in him. Arjuna on his part promises to play his part in such a way that his valour will be extolled to the end of time.

(VIII 36†K4V, BDa, Dn, D 1.3-7 Cc).

Good and evil powers gather round Arjuna and Karṇa respectively.

(VIII 37†T1-2 GM).

Aśvatthāman presses Duryodhana to make peace with Yudhiṣṭhira. Addition to VIII 64. 20 cd-28.

(VIII 38†T1.2 GM).

Sounds of drums, conches, tabors, etc. pervade the sky. 4 lines added.

*(IX 43*D1).*

Bhīma kills horses and smashes the chariot of Kṛtavarman. 5 lines added.

*(IX 65*ŚK 1-S BDn D2.3.5.6.8.-11 T1-2).*

Arjuna's feats in the battle. Three lines.[1] Three lines.[2]

*([1] IX 79*D; [2] 82*D10).*

Yudhiṣṭhira's appearance when he is discharging a javelin at Śalya to kill him.

*(IX 93*TG).*

Śakuni smashes the wheels of Yudhiṣṭhira's chariot by a machine, also his sword, bow and sharp javelins etc. 5 lines added.

*(IX 118*Dn D4.6).*

Śakuni urges Kaurava army to fight saying, "Now is the door of heaven opened for you; pleasure of the sports with nymphs awaits you."

*(IX 126*D4).*

Arjuna expresses regrets that even after eminent warriors from Kaurava side had fallen, the war did not end. 5 lines added.[1] 4 lines.[2]

*([1] IX 132*D1; [2] 135*T1.3.4. G M 2.4).*

Śakuni falls[1] and Sahadeva gives out a lion's roar.[2]

*([1] IX 164*D4.7.8. T-1-4 GM [2] IX 166*D8S).*

Vanquishing of Drupada is described in four lines, in the Constituted Text. It takes up 199 lines in I.78† where it is narrated that the Kauravas first attack the city of Drupada but are repelled by him. The Pāṇḍavas then take over, and in a fierce battle they capture Drupada.

(I. 78†Da, Dn Ds. 4.5 K4 S).

(ii) Miscellaneous Details

Duḥṣanta introduces his wife and son to Rathantaryā, his mother, who blesses everybody.

*(I. 684*S).*

Toilet of Draupadī (50 lines).

(I 198†D4 [suppl. sec. m]).

Vidura tries to impress invincibility of Pāṇḍavas on the mind of Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

(I 104†T3G2-4).

A list of presents made by Drupada to his sons-in-law.

*(I 106*D4 [marg sec. m.])*

Reception of Pāṇḍavas and Draupadī in Hastināpura after marriage. 20 lines.

(I 107†D4 [marg sec. m.] S).

Yudhiṣṭhira is coronated as king of Khāṇḍavaprastha with all pomp in the presence of Vyāsa and Kṛṣṇa. 59 lines.

(1108†D4 [marg sec m.] S).

Entry of Pāṇḍavas in Khāṇḍavaprastha.

(I 109†S 16 lines).

A list of the accomplishments of Nārada.

(I 111†D4 [sec.m] S. 55 lines).

Description of Khāṇḍava forest. 18 lines.

(I 117†S).

A long list of various lores in which Nārada was proficient. 15 lines.

(II all MSS except S 1 K 1-3).

S adds to the lists of gods, sages, nymphs, kings, etc. who are sitting in the Halls of Indra, Varuṇa, Kubera, etc.

(II 81, 82*, 83*, 89*, 94*, 99*, 101*, 105* etc.).*

Other versions like B1 V1 D also do the same.

*(I 82*85*, 86*88*90*, 91*, 92*, 93*, 95*, 100*, 103* etc.).*

Demon Ghatotkaca. 7 lines.

(II 15†S).

River Kāverī. 32 lines.

(II 15†S).

Description of Lankā. 10 lines.

(II 15†S).

Palace of Vibhīṣaṇa. 8 lines.

(II 15†S).

Vibhiṣaṇa. 12 lines.

(II 15†S).

Ghatotkaca narrates the whole story of the Pāṇḍavas to Vibhīṣaṇa. 98 lines.

(II 15†S).

Tributes offered by Vibhīṣaṇa. 15 lines.

(II 15†S).

Journey of Kṛṣṇa and the people of Dvārakā to Hastināpur for Rājasūya sacrifice. 37 lines.

(II 18†S).

Śiśupāla names various kings worthy of the precedence in honour and states their achievements.[1] 29 lines. 16 lines.[2]

([1] II 20†S, [2] II 23†K4V1B [B1 marg] D except D4-6) S.

Detailed performance of Yudhiṣṭhira's Rājasūya sacrifice. 94 lines.

(II 29†S).

Tributes paid by various kings to Yudhiṣṭhira at the time of the Rājasūya sacrifice.

(II 33†S. 34†S. 35†S).

Yudhiṣṭhira starts for Hastināpur for the fatal game.

(II 36†S. 19 lines. 37†S. 37 lines).

People of Hastināpur climb lofty buildings, tall trees and gather in the streets to watch the Pāṇḍavas leaving for the forest. They also give vent to their grief and resolve to accompany the exiles. All the four castes join in sympathizing with the Pāṇḍavas.

(II 41†S. [63 lines]. 43†T1G3. 5 [100 lines]).

Kuntī's piteous wailings. Her message to Draupadī in the Constituted Text is more dignified.

(II 42†N (except N1) T1G3-5M1B5-D1,2. 18 lines).

People of Hastināpur are stricken with grief after Pāṇḍavas left just as those of Ayodhyā were when Rāma had gone to the forest.

(1144†T. G3-5).

Indra invests Nala with magic so that he could enter Damayantī's apartment unseen. The Text does not mention it.

*(III 219*T2 G3).*

Nala eloquently argues on the side of each god suitor of Damayantī describing greatness of each. Damayantī tearfully replies that she loves him alone. Nala points out the difficulty in grinding his own axe when he has come for the gods. This is in continuation of II Ch. 52vv22-24 and Ch. 53vv. 1-7.

(III Ś K1-2B D (exceptD1-3).

Description of Kali. He is black in complexion, wearing red garments carrying a pitcher of wine and roasted meat, surrounded by dogs and indulging in talk about such dirty things as kidnapping others' wives, stealing others' wealth, drinking, gambling, etc.

(III 9†M2).

Bhīma enumerates the evil deeds of Duryodhana.

(III 23†T2 GM).

Whimsical behaviour of Durvāsas to Duryodhana.

(III 25†Dc 1 Dn D 1.2.6. G3. Dc¹ adds 18 lines).

Yudhiṣṭhira gives a brief synopsis of the brave deeds of Bhīma before asking him in what capacity he is going to stay in the city of Virāṭa. In the Constituted Text the question is put in one single line.

*(IV27*S 13-1|2 lines).*

Exploits of Arjuna described by Yudhiṣṭhira in 41 lines. In the Constituted Text they are stated in 24 lines.

*(IV 47*S).*

Sahadeva described in six lines by Yudhiṣṭhira. There is no such preliminary in the Constituted Text.

*(IV 84*S).*

Sahadevā pictures the way the cows will flourish under his care.
*(IV 88*S).*

Exploits of Nakula and Sahadeva described by Yudhiṣṭhira when he asks them to deposit their bows in the hollow of a tree.
*(IV 163*S).*

A list given by Draupadī of the insults she had to bear.
*(IV 354*S. 356*S).*

N (some versions omitting certain lines) in a passage of eight lines describes how humiliating Bhīma's job was.
(IV 363).*

Humiliating work that Arjuna was doing in the herem of Virāṭa.
*(IV 378*S.)*

Draupadī is bound on the bier of Kīcaka. Expansion of IV2. 10 cd.
*(IV 462*S [M3 missing]).*

A list of qualities of Kīcaka put in the mouth of Duryodhana's spies.
*(IV 505*S).*

The country where Yudhiṣṭhira would be staying in exile would be happy, prosperous, and pious.
*(IV 535*T1 536*M 1.2.-4.5. 537*M5 538*S. 539*B4 Dn D1-3, 6.8.10-12 540*S [except M1.3] 541*B4).*

S substitutes 43 lines for 39 in the Text describing the weapons of Pāṇḍavas,[1] also another 28 lines for 28 in the Text.[2]
*([1] IV 704*S, [2] IV 720*S).*

Uttarā begs pardon of Arjuna and expresses confidence.
*(IV 748*S, 749*T1).*

Symptoms of Arjuna coming to attack the Kaurava army.
*(IV 800*S).*

S substitutes a passage of 19 lines for eight in the Text reporting Arjuna's heroic speech, professing to defeat Kurus and win back the cows.

*(IV 885*19).*

Uttara is nervous but Arjuna promises to show him an uncomparable battle.

*(IV 902*D 5.7.9).*

Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīma, Nakula, and Sahadeva are reminded of insults heaped upon them and Kṛṣṇa, Virāṭa, Drupada, Dhṛṣṭadyumna, and Sikhandin are challenged in irritating words by Duryodhana through Ulūka.

(V 9†K4 D Dn Ds D1.3.4 6-8.10 [108 lines]. V 10†K4 B Dn, Ds D1 [om lines 1-6] 3.4.6-8.10 [28 lines]).

Bhīma, Sahadeva (to Śakuni), Arjuna, and Yudhiṣṭhira give out their reactions to the challenge of Duryodhana.

(12†K4 BDn, Ds D3, 4.6-8.10 [103 lines]).

Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīma, Nakula, Sahadeva, Virāṭa Drupada, Śikhandin, Dhṛṣṭadyumna, Yudhiṣṭhira again send counter message to Duryodhana through Ulūka. Yudhiṣṭhira is rather apologetic.

(V 13†K4BDn Ds D3, 6-8.10 [61 lines]).

A list of the commanders of Yudhiṣṭhira's army and magnitudes of their forces.

(V 14†Ñ [22 lines]).

To the Vihūtis of God the following are added by Nepali 1 Kashmiri 5 Devanagari Composite 3 (Marg sec.m. om line two, i.e., reference to Saurabheya and ghee): Barley among annual plants, gold among metals, Saurabheya among bulls, ghee among unctuous substances, and *darbha* among grass.

(VI 101).*

Gītā that emanated from the mouth of Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself should be well studied. What is the use of other prolific scriptures? Gītā is comprised of all the scriptures, Hari of all the gods, Gaṅgā of all the holy places and Manu of all the Vedas. One who bears in

heart the four Ga's viz. Gītā, Gaṅgā, Gāyatrī, and Govinda is not born again.

*(VI 113*K2 B2-4 Dn D3 [om lines about the four Ga's] 4.8).*

Enumeration of the qualities of the accomplished veterans whom Abhimanyu had killed.

*(VII 339*TG1-5 M).*

Ten lines are added by Devanagari Composite 3.6 to the hymn addressed to Śiva in VII 57. 49-58 with words borrowed from the Rudra Section of the Yajurveda.

(VII 421 D3.6).*

Dhṛtarāṣṭra enquires about the followers and assistants of Droṇa and guesses that the Pāñcāla army must have trembled like cows in winter. 5 lines added.

*(VII 1109 *B3 Dn D2.4.5.7.8).*

Dhṛatarāṣṭra expresses concern over the condition of his sons and partisans that Pāṇḍavas are always victorious and joyful and Kauravas ever dejected and frightened.

*(VII 1113*N [except D3 6; KŚ missing]).*

Description of Ghaṭotkaca. 7 lines added.

*(VII 1127*BDc1 Dn D5.6).*

Dhṛtarāṣṭra asks about the reaction of Pāṇḍavas after the death of Ghatotkaca and also of the Kauravas. 15 lines added.

*(VII 1242*TG1-4 M1.2).*

Pāṇḍavas are afraid of Droṇa and then along with the Srnjayas they attack him. Five lines added.

*(VII 1271*Ds).*

Battle between Droṇa on one side and Virāṭa and Drupada on the other. 12 lines added.

*(VII 1272*K2 (marg) BDG1 Dn2 D3.5.6).*

Bhīma attacks Droṇa. 5 lines added. In the Text Bhīma attacks Droṇa's army.

*(VII 1275*K2).*

Sātyaki upbraids Dhṛṣṭadyumna for killing Droṇa and addressing insulting words to Arjuna. 6 lines added.

*(VII 1388*K4 BDc1 Dn D1.5.6).*

Previous history of the Nārāyaṇa missile. 12 lines added.

*(VII 1401*D6.8).*

The three cities are reduced to ashes. Gods and sages including the creator God and Bṛhaspati begin to praise Śiva. 7 lines added.

*(VII 1459*D4. 5.7.8).*

Vidura expresses happiness that at least one son, viz., Yuyutsu is left to Dhṛtarāṣṭra. 6 lines added.

*(IX 175*Ś1 K Dn 1-3 D1-11).*

Desolate appearance of Hastināpura after the defeat of Kauravas.

*(IX 177*Ś1 K D T1-2).*

Sages observing various vows and torturing their bodies in various ways. 4 lines added[1]. 5 lines added[2].

*([1] IX 226*D2 [2] IX 227*D2).*

Draupadī laments the loss of her relatives and asks Yudhiṣṭhira to renounce the world. She also declares her resolution to burn herself or to commit suicide with poison by hanging herself or throwing herself down a precipice. She then thinks of taking revenge on Aśvatthāman and declares her resolution to commit suicide by fasting if Aśvatthāman is allowed to live.

(X 1†1 1 K2. 4. 32 lines added to 12 in the text).

The iron image that Dhṛtarāṣtra broke mistaking it for Bhīma, was prepared by Duryodhana for practice of wrestling and mock-fight.

*(XI 34*K1-3 Dn 1.2 [marg.] D2-4).*

A long list of sages is added to the names already mentioned in the Text. These sages are sitting round Bhīṣma who is lying on his arrow-bed. 11 lines.

*(XII 66*K2.4.5. V1 BD [except D1.4.7]).*

The dog turned into *Śarabha* thinks that the sage may perhaps transform other beasts also into *Śarabhas* and birds into eagles. So it would be in the dog's own interest to kill the sage so that he could enjoy his *Śarabhahood* alone. 12 lines added.

*(XII 273*D7S [G3 missing]).*

Devanāgarī Composite 4 rather irrelevantly describes the importance of elephants as decoration and as a powerful means in a battle. 10 lines.

(XII 276).*

Importance of a royal chaplain; his duties and qualifications. 73 lines added.

(XII 8†D7S).

A list of persons for whom a Brahmin should not officiate. 21 lines irrelevantly added.

(XII 9†D7S).

Employment of the four expedients. 24 lines added.

(XII 10†D7S).

Hard penance practised by Hiraṇyākṣa. Three lines.

*(XII 551*Kumbh. ed.).*

A repulsive description of human body. 81 lines.

(XII 594 Kumbh ed.).*

Unnecessary description of the life history of a tree from seed to seed.

(XIII 36 D10S).*

A lengthy passage of 500 lines laying down duties of four Varṇas, four Āśramas, Prāyaścitta, etc. has been inserted after XIII 98 by D10. It is a small *smṛti* ascribed to Parāśara.

(XIII 10†).

Description of Śiva on Himalayas.

(XIII 15†D10S. LL 193-200).

The dialogue between Umā and Maheśvara in which the following topics are treated:

Duties of Varṇas and Āśramas, duties of ascetics, Kings and householders, the doctrine of Karman and its fruits, many secrets about deities, rules about gifts and charities, control of senses and of mind.

(XIII 15†D10S).

A forest on Mountain Himālaya with much mythological material.

(XIII 15†D10S. LL 162-192).

Description of a cemetery.

(XIII 15†D10S. LL 361-364).

Description of a city (24 lines).

(XIII 20†D4-8. LL 9-26 and 31-35).

A cow (Six lines).

(XIII 20†D4-8. LL 39-44).

Additions to the description of Himālaya in the Text.

*(XIII 81*V1BDn D1-10).*

Description of the discus Sudarśana. 10 lines.

*(XIII 85*V1 BDn D1-10).*

Upamanyu's mother describes the condition of ascetics to impress on his mind that they cannot have milk. Seven lines added to the two in the Text.

*(XIV 101*N).*

Upmanyu prefers the lowest status as a devotee of Śiva to even the highest one otherwise. 10 lines added.[1] Six lines.[2]

*([1] XIII 109*N. [2] XIII 110*N).*

Kṛṣṇa wishes that Śiva manifests himself to him. Six lines.

*(XIII 138*N).*

Upamanyu assures Kṛṣṇa that he will have the vision of Śiva. Eight lines added.

*(XIII 139*N).*

Various beings, earthly and heavenly, praising Śiva. Eight lines added.

*(XIII 146*T2.3. G2.4).*

An addition to the thousand names of Śiva. 22 lines.

*(XIII 155*D10 TG4 M1-3).*

Eight lines added to the Phalaśruti of the hymn of Śiva's thousand names.

*(XIII 180*V1 B [except B3] Dn D8).*

Importance of Gaṅgā. It is added that Narmadā is sacred everywhere while Gaṅgā is sacred at Kanakhala and Sarasvatī is so at Kurukṣetra.

*(XIII 234*D10).*

Mataṅga's penance. Indra tells him that one born as a Cāṇḍāla will never become a Brahmin.

*(XIII 254*N (V1 missing).*

Guests that had assembled for the sacrifice of Śiva.

*(XIII 395*N [except D6.7.D3 missing]).*

A hymn addressed to Śiva.

(XIII 15†D10S. LL 431-441).

CHAPTER ELEVEN

CONCLUDING REMARKS

AFTER careful analysis of the material, a study of the main tendencies in the two recensions and the various versions will be attempted in this chapter. It is not possible to consider here each and every reference in the foregoing pages. However, a representative selection of the same will be utilized for the discussion that follows.

The nucleus of the Epic, the Kaurava-Pāṇḍava story is the same in all versions. The material available does not give any support to the theory that a pro-Kaurava epic was later turned into a pro-Pāṇḍava one. Admiration for heroes like Duryodhana[1] and Karṇa[2] is found but then similar admiration for Bhīma[3] and Arjuna[4] also is there.

Additions have been made to explain away some moral lapse on the part of the heroes or to introduce the Kṛṣṇa element or some such purpose, e.g., Draupadī's polyandrous marriage has a silly justification in the Constituted Text but, the Southern redactors add seven more.[5]

Arjuna and Subhadrā episode is a simple affair in the Text, but the Southern redactors make it quite an affair by introducing love and elopement, taking care to add a regular marriage before the loving pair begins to live happily ever after.[6] In the Text there is no love between Arjuna and Subhadrā. Arjuna is fascinated by her and on the advice of Kṛṣṇa simply carries her away.

Instances of Parāśara and Matsyagandhā,[7] Duḥṣanta, and

[1] IX 201*B 1.2.5. Dn D1.5.10.
[2] VII 1†D4.7.8. 2†Dn 914*DS 1040* K5Dn1 D5.7.
[3] VII 1408*TG2.M 3.5. VI 365*TG 366*M etc.
[4] IV 46†S.
[5] I 102†T3 G2-4.6.
[6] I 113†D4 (marg. sec. m) S 114† D4 (marg. sec. m) S 115† K4 (marg. sec. m) D4S.
[7] I 36†D3T2G (except G6).

Śakuntalā,[1] Yayāti and Śarmiṣṭhā[2] also can be quoted where the pairs are married with the whole parapheranalia of priests, relatives, *mantras*, and gifts. The Epic frankly narrates that it was an instance of lewdness on the part of the great sage Parāśara and that only *Gāndharva* form of marriage had taken place in the case of the two remaining pairs. Arjuna and Urvaśī episode[3] in the *Āraṇyakaparvan* has also been added by some redactor interested in emphasizing moral susceptibilities of the Epic hero.

Apart from the sexual morality, the Southerners are particular about ethics and morality in other walks of life also. The Constituted Text informs us that a tribal woman and her five sons were deliberately burnt by Bhīma in the house of wax at Vāraṇāvata to camouflage the escape of the Pāṇḍavas, but the Southerners again do not want the heroes to behave in this heartless and inhuman manner and therefore they add that these unfortunate victims were in the service of Duryodhana as his spies and they were served right.[4]

In the great battle, Arjuna cut the right hand of Bhuriśravas, a warrior on the Kaurava side, who was about to kill Sātyaki, a friend of Arjuna. Now this was against the rules of just war, and we find in the text that Arjuna is blaming himself for this act but the Southern redactors again add five grounds on which Arjuna is justified in his behaviour.[5]

Attempts have been made to introduce the Kṛṣṇa element in the epic by some versions like Nilakantha's Devanagari, Devanagari Composite and the entire Southern Recension. While the most disgraceful act of disrobing Draupadī was being attempted, the Constituted Text describes, garment after garment appeared in the place of those snatched away but we find no explanation of the miracle there. But Nilkantha's Devanāgarī version and most manuscripts of the Southern Recension state that she appealed to Kṛṣṇa and that He rescued her in the shameful situation.[6] Other versions like Kashmiri 2,4 Devanāgarī Composite Bengali and some manuscripts of the Maithili, Grantha, and Telugu versions say

[1] I 610*D4.
[2] I 807*S.
[3] III 6†K2. 4BDc Dn D1-6 S.
[4] I 1474*S.
[5] VII 13†Dn1 D2.3.5.6 S.
[6] II 543*Dn D1 (marg.) 4.5 (marg. sec. m) 547*S (except G1 M2).

that hundreds of garments appeared because of the observance of *Dharma*.[1]

The Durvāsas episode is found only in some manuscripts of Caturbhuja's Devanagari, Nilakantha's Devanāgarī, Devanāgarī Composite and Grantha versions only.[2]

Kṛṣṇa's rescue of Draupadī on the occasion of her attempted disrobing and his help to the Pāṇḍavas when Durvāsas came to test them, are two very popular themes in the devotional literature of Kṛṣṇa cult and many touching references to these are found in literature of all the Modern Indian languages but they prove to be interpolations on incontrovertible manuscripts evidence.

Some other incidents in which Kṛṣṇa is represented as a trickster are also later additions, e.g. Kṛṣṇa breaking a blade of grass and throwing the pieces in opposite directions in order to suggest to Bhīma what he should do with the pieces of Jarāsandha[3] or covering the sun with his miraculous power[4] or with the discus.[5]

The Southern Recension interpolates a long passage of 1612 lines which describes the divinity of Kṛṣṇa, his *avatāras*, his exploits in the *Sabhāparvan* which itself runs into 4780 lines all told.[6] The same recension also interpolates a passage of 3447 lines expounding *Vaiṣṇavadharama* and glorifying Kṛṣṇa in the *Aśvamedhaparvan* itself comprising of some 5700 lines.[7]

So on the whole South appears to be more interested in enhancing the importance of Kṛṣṇa in the epic which already has given more than a fair share to that popular figure.

On the contrary, we find references to Goddess Durgā only in some manuscripts of the Northern versions—Bengali and Devanāgarī.[8] Considering the popularity of Durgā in Bengal, it is not surprising. Neither the Southern Recension nor the other versions of the Northern Recension except Kashmiri 2, Devanāgarī Composite and Nilkantha's Devanāgarī nor the Constituted Text mention

[1] II 553*K2. 4V1 BDT1 G5 (Cn glosses).
[2] III 25†Dc1 Dn D1.2.3. G3.
[3] II 253*Dn2 D4.8. G3.
[4] VII 1009*S.
[5] VII 1009*TG2.5 (add).
[6] II 21†S.
[7] XIV 4†TGM2-4.
[8] IV 4†D2.3.5.6.7.9, 11, 12, Dn. VI 1 †K2.4BDa Dn D2.4.7.8.

Durgā. The Gaṇeśa episode has been put at the beginning by Ratnagarbha's Devanāgarī and Kashmiri 4.6 only.[1]

Though both the recensions sing the glory of Śiva, it is more emphasized by the Northerners.[2] The Southerners go to the length of granting him equal status with Viṣṇu-Kṛṣṇa.[3] Though in the Constituted Text we find Kṛṣṇa worshiping Śiva in order to obtain a son, the whole episode seems to be hanging loose without any organic relation with the whole epic.[4]

The Southerners together with the Kashmiris introduce the poison episode which brings Śiva into prominence, but while the Southerners are content with Śiva drinking the poison to save the universe,[5] the Kashmiris enjoy a dig at the cost of Viṣṇu whom they describe as having been made black by the terrible poison.[6]

In the Constituted Text we find no poison episode but only sparks of fire flying all round from the mouth of Vāsuki. These also cause havoc but Indra showers rain and everything cools down.[7]

Sometimes the Southern Recension appears to be preserving very old traditions, much older than those in the Northern Recension or the Constituted Text. Cows are held in high reverence in the *Mahabharatā:* Chapters after chapters are devoted to the description of the glory of cows in extravagant terms. Slaughter of cows is simply unthinkable in such a context, but the Southern Recension mentions it on such a large scale that a big river of fat and blood begins to flow from the piled up hides and this slaughter is not carried on by any *Rākṣasas* or *Yavanas* but by a pious king Rantideva in a sacrificial session. King Rantideva does not suffer for this in the other world but goes to heaven and becomes a friend of Indra.[8]

Turning to the principles about the ordering of society we find again a sharp difference between the Northern and Southern redactors.

The attitude of the Constituted Text towards the *Varṇa* system

[1] I 1†fn pp. 884-85.
[2] XIII 73*N 94*V1 B Dn D5.8 113*N.
[3] XII 5†T2 VII 1440* ŚK (K5 missing) BDc1 Dn D1-3.5.
[4] XIII 14-18.
[5] I 9†S (except M1).
[6] I 10†K4.
[7] I 16, 15-24.
[8] XIII 9†D10 S c v.

is a mixed one, e.g. Yudhiṣṭhira in the *Āraṇyakaparvan* plays down the importance of birth and sets more value on qualities. "Whoever possesses character is a Brahmin,"[1] says he. At the same time there are other views in the Mahābhārata itself which maintains that one's *Varṇa* depends entirely upon birth and cannot be changed in this very existence.[2]

The Southern Recension wants to emphasize this point and also to claim more and more privileges for the Brahmins. Even in passages glorifying Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Southerners do not forget to place Brahmins above Him saying that even He owes His eminent status to the favour of Brahmins.[3] Brahmins are placed outside the pale of secular power so much so that a king is not allowed to punish Brahmins even for grave offences. He can at the most only get angry with them at times.[4]

In fairness to the Southerners, it must be pointed out that they have imposed certain restrictions on Brahmins, e.g. that they will be sinning if they wear sandals,[5] that they lose their Brahminhood if they live under royal patronage for a period of twelve years or more or if they stay in a town for a similar period.[6] It is also admitted that administering a Kingdom is not a job for Brahmins. The experiment was tried once with disastrous results.[7]

The Northern redactors are not particular about emphasizing rights and privileges of *Brāhmaṇas*, obiviously satisfying themselves with whatever concessions the Epic offered. On the contrary they point out that Brahmins are brave only in words and *Kṣatriyas* in deeds.[8] They hold that abundance of wealth is a calamity for Brahmins and consequently for the world, for if Brahmins are very rich, they will desist from observance of *Dharma* and that will spell ruin for the world. So they should be kept at subsistence level only.[9]

If from the privileged class we turn to the depressed one, we find that the Śūdra is labouring under many hardships and the Southern

[1] XIII 131. 47-50.
[2] XII 28-30.
[3] XIII 1†D10S cv.
[4] XIII 15†D10 S cv ; LL 1309 and 1317.
[5] XIV 4†TG M2-4 lines 2791-92.
[6] ibid, LL 3290-3303.
[7] XII 111*D7S.
[8] IV 42†D7.
[9] XIII 337* N/LL 2-5.

redactors add many more to them so much so that a Śūdra is not allowed to drink the milk of a brown cow. If he violates this injunction, not only he, but also his ancestors go to hell and even a Brahmin accepting gifts from such a Śūdra incurs terrible sin.[1]

However, these same people sometimes wax liberal and hold that devotees of Kṛṣṇa though *Śūdras* or *Caṇḍālas* must not be insulted, (one who insults them goes to Hell)[2] that even if a *Śūdra* makes any offering, however humble, to Kṛṣṇa, He holds it on His head,[3] that a Śūdra with good behaviour and self-control should be as much respected as a Brahmin.[4]

The Northerners again do not show any interest in adding to the sufferings of the Śūdras. The Bengali redactors allow Śūdras to observe all religious rites.[5] A Śūdra with abundant of wealth is mentioned by the Epic.

Real sharp difference of opinion comes out if we turn to the present over-privileged class, i.e., the fair sex. Southern redactors want to discipline them and keep them in their proper place. They go to the length of saying that if a man has one thousand tongues, he lives for a hundred years and does nothing except describing the faults of woman, he will die without finishing his job.[6] They are clear in their minds that creator created women for the sake of sons and for the pleasure of the husband.[7] No woman can have a place in heaven, without a husband and a child.[8] A woman is to have one husband and a man many wives; this is the *Dharma* ordained by *Pitṛs*.[9]

A story is told of two women, one devoted to her husband and the other worshipper of gods. After death the husband-worshipper went to a higher heaven but the god-worshipper to an inferior one.[10]

Though some manuscripts from some Northern versions insist that a husband should be properly respected and cared for,[11] the

[1] XIII 15†D10S.
[2] XIV 4†TG M2-4 LL 3254-57.
[3] ibid. LL 3262-63 and 3350-51.
[4] XIII 15†D10S.
[5] XII 692*V1B Dn D 2, 4-9.
[6] XIII 289*S.
[7] I 804*5.
[8] ibid.
[9] I 100†S D4 (Supp. foll. sec. m.) K4.
[10] XIII 15†D10S cv LL 4510-4531.
[11] XII 371*K5 Da2 Dn3 D2.3.8.

Northern redactors alone sing the greatness of a wife. I have not come across a single Southern redactor joining them. Even among the Northerners, it is the Bengali redactors that are unanimously eloquent in glorifying a wife. They hold that a house though full of sons, grandsons and daughters-in-law is desolate for a householder without a wife.[1] Like King Louis of France exclaiming *"L' etat, Cést moi"* these redactors claim, *"La maison, Cést la femme"* literally. A wife is the home in fact. A house without a wife is worse than a forest, so a widower had better go to the forest.[2] Even roots of trees are like a home in the company of a wife and a palace is a forest without her. An agreeable wife is real wealth. Wealth is no wealth at all.[3]

Why should there be such a sharp difference between the attitudes of the Southerners and the Northerners on this point? Could it be because of the Śakti cult prevalent in North in which prominence is given to woman as representing the mother Goddess? This may perhaps explain why Bengali redactors are so eloquent in glorification of woman though in the capacity of a wife.

With all their uncharitable attitude towards the fair sex, the Southerners must be given their due in one respect, viz., their attitude towards molested women. The action taken by the idol of India, Rāma, against his innocent wife is too notorious to be stated here in detail. The Southern radactors give liberal concessions not only to unfortunate women but also to confirmed adulteresses. They hold the view that women are automatically purified every month.[4] A man abandoning his wife for any reason whatsoever incurs the sin of infanticide.[5] No man should abuse or harass or kill a woman if he wishes well to himself.[6] If a woman commits adultery the blame for the crime is put at the door of the male concerned.[7]

Even in the case of girls going astray before marriage, the Southerners take a liberal view and prescribe only three-fourths of the purificatory rites for a Brahmanicide, the remaining one-fourth

[1] XII 364*K3.5 V1B.
[2] ibid.
[3] XII 366*K3.5 V1 B Da Dn1.3.
[4] XIII 17A†D10S cv. D2-5.8.
[5] ibid.
[6] XIII 7A†D10S cv.
[7] ibid.

is supposed to have been performed after child birth.[1] Sons of such mothers born before wedlock were called, *Kānīna* sons, they were fully authorized to make offerings to gods and manes, i.e., they were completely accepted in the society.

Southerners also treat child widows leniently. A girl in whose case, the marriage ceremony was performed (but the marriage had not been consummated) could marry again after her husband dies. She was called *Punarbhū* but was not disqualified otherwise in any respect.[2]

However, the law-giver from South modifies this liberal stand and goes on to say, "Husband and wife can separate from each other without incurring sin for the goal of *Mokṣa*. A husband can also abandon a wife who is attached to someone else apart from adultery committed only once, whose children die, who commits adultery with a *Śudra*, a confirmed adulteress but he must first make sure of his wife's guilt".[3] A husband can also abandon a wife who is self-willed, acts as she pleases, who is sterile or gives birth only to daughters or whose children die young.[4]

The Northerners also speak in very strong terms about persons abandoning their wives. Some Kashmiri manuscripts say that such a man wanders on the earth, hungry, bereft of piety, prosperity, and pleasure, begging and dressed in tattered clothes. One Devanāgarī manuscript also lays down that such a man incurs sin beyond expiation.[5] It will be interesting to note that the *Āp.D.S.* prescribes a very hard penance for one who forsakes his wife. It orders such a person to put on the hide of an ass, with its hairy side turned outside and to beg alms from seven houses everyday with the words "Give alms to him who forsook his wife." He is to do this for six months.

The only case in the Mahābhārata of a person abandoning a woman because somebody else carried her away though against her will, is that of Śālva. His behaviour in this context is referred to with disapproval by the Epic.[6]

In their attitudes towards royalty also the Southerners and the Northerners differ sharply.

[1] XIII 7A†D10S cv.
[2] ibid.
[3] ibid.
[4] ibid.
[5] I 27† Ko. 4 Dal.
[6] V 172.

The Southerners consider kingship so sinful and wicked that they equate a king to ten prostitutes put together or to a butcher who is conducting ten thousand butcheries.[1] On the other hand, the Northerners look upon a king as being equal to ten *Śrotriyas* put together.[2] The Śarada and Kashmiri manuscripts make Bhīṣma say that the king is the greatest deity so that his whims should be pampered.[3] Northern redactors with those from Tamilnadu are agreed in holding that the king is at the root of the smooth working of the universe. They cannot bear to think of anarchy.[4]

On the contrary the Southerners are stern in their stand towards a king. Kingship is, they say, the fruit of great austerities. So a king should be careful. He must discipline himself first, then his servants and the subjects last.[5] He must conduct his administration in keeping with rules of political science, without hatred towards anybody.[6] He must not listen to the advice of women, foolish persons or persons with perverse minds.

The Southerners also uphold the rights of the subjects and insist on the duties of kings. They maintain that if a king fails to protect the distressed and especially ladies in difficulties and does not bring the culprits to book, he does not deserve to be a king.[7] Northerners forbid a king to take away wealth from old people, minors, blind or miserable people or from weeping ladies even for performing sacrifices.[8]

So the Northerners are cavaliers and the Southerners are roundheads in their attitudes towards royalty. Could it be that the concept of god-kings as found in the deification of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa in the North is responsible for the Northerners being so much royalistic? It is true that by the time the redactors we are studying were active, Rāma and Kṛṣṇa had reached the South also and as we have seen, the Southerners were greater devotees of Kṛṣṇa than the Northerners, but Rāma and Kṛṣṇa reached the South after being identified with the Supreme God and perhaps faint memories of

[1] XIII 423*D10 TG.
[2] I 402*K3.4 ÑV1 BD T1G.
[3] VI 204*ŚKo-2.
[4] I 402* K.3 4ÑV1 BDT1 G.
[5] XIII 15† D10 Scv LL 876-895.
[6] ibid, LL 1001-15.
[7] IV 329*TG2.
[8] XIII 337*N.

the process of deification of these kings were still lingering in the subconscious mind of the North.

Northerners do not seem to have been very much attached to wealth. They stress the point that wealth is not all in all. It is complacency that matters. Better not to desire for wealth at all. "Wealth obtained should be given away and not enjoyed or wasted. And after all, sages have gone to heaven even without wealth.[1]"

The Southerners on the other hand seem to be more practical. They maintain that wealth has held the world together, so one must appreciate wealth.[2]

Wealth is exhausted by lapse of good luck and not by enjoyment, so one should enjoy wealth as much as possible.[3] Moneyed people can get out of difficulties. A person without money has no place either in this world or in the next.[4] So the Southern redactors take care to advise how best one can utilize one's income. They advise that 25% of the income should be spent for religious purposes, 25% for maintaining oneself, 25% should be invested for improving one's prospects, and 25% should be saved for the rainy day.[5]

The same practical attitude of the Southerners is noticed in the treatment of *Ahiṁsā*. *Ahiṁsā* is raised to the skies in all religious literature including the Mahābhārata though in the latter many places. Some Devanāgarī manuscripts join in the glorification of *Ahiṁsā* and declare that just as in the foot of an elephant, feet of all other animals are covered, so in *Ahiṁsā* all piousness is contained.[6] impossibility of observing total *Ahiṁsā* is also pointed out in

The Southern redactors take care to pay lip homage to *Ahiṁsā* and say that all pious acts put together are not equal to even one-sixteenth part of *Ahiṁsā*,[7] but the same passage in the same manuscript takes care to point out that it is next to impossible to observe *Ahiṁsā* completely since the whole universe is full of beings large and small, visible and invisible, and that even foodgrains have life. The nature of every activity is determined by the mind

[1] XII 4†N (except D7).
[2] XII 203* D7S.
[3] XIII 610*S.
[4] XIII 15†D10S cv LL 1469-70.
[5] ibid., LL 1441-1467.
[6] XIII 20†D4-8.
[7] XIII 15†D10 S cv LL 1228-32.

behind it, so one should not mind *Hiṁsā* when it is unavoidable.[1]

It is next pointed out by the same redactor that Brahmins refusing to perform Vedic sacrifices, and soldiers refusing to fight because their activities involve *Hiṁsā* will positively incur sin and go to hell.[2]

The Southern redactors are greater lovers of details with or without rhyme and reason, e.g., they make Draupadī almost give herself out by declaring to the queen of Virāṭa that she was seized by hair even in the presence of her husbands (plural) and that she had afterwards to sustain herself by fruits, roots, etc. in a forest for twelve years without any house to stay in.[3] Now she is showing this indiscretion when the Pāṇḍavas are supposed to stay incognito for one year.

In course of such descriptions they do not fight shy of introducing erotic element often bordering on obscenity.[4] Sometimes they introduce humorous touches, e.g., Morsels of food in Bhīma's belly become one mass by the blows of Baka on his back, yet Bhīma decides to finish the food off before engaging Baka in combat, because after the fight, he is sure that he will not be able to eat the food since by that time he would have touched the corpse of Baka.[5]

Two Telugu and Grantha manuscripts point out that when a wife with one husband has to lead a miserable life, Draupadī with five husbands has no limit to her share.[6]

The Northerners are also not averse to humour, e.g., some Kashmiri and Devanāgarī Composite manuscripts describe that Arjuna buries an arrow into the head of Bhīṣma and loudly asks the Kauravas to mark the wonderful horn of the old man that he secured for the sake of his grand children.[7]

The Northerners also add details without any conceivable reason, e.g., some Bengali and Devanāgarī versions add to the already tedious commentary of Sañjaya on the great war a passage in 339

[1] ibid., LL 1095-1105.
[2] ibid., LL 2697-98 and 1203-5.
[3] IV 208*S.
[4] I 89†D5S, I 1333*G1 1335*G1, etc.
[5] I 1649*G 1.2.4.
[6] IV 386*T2G2.
[7] IV 1028*K2 D1.2.4.5.9 and IV 1029*D4.

lines in which Śveta a warrior on Pāṇḍava side, attacks Śalya on Kaurava side and it is only after the Kaurava commander-in-chief, Bhīṣma gives a tough fight, that he is killed at last. I do not know if there was any king by name Śveta in these provinces whom the poetasters wanted to figure in the great war.[1]

To sum up, a study of the interpolated material to the Mahābhārata provides some interesting information about the regional cultural patterns of various regions of India that have contributed something to the Mahābhārata corpus. To find out why these regions should represent the particular cultural patterns will be a very interesting enquiry which can perhaps be best handled by sociologists and historians specializing in the various regional cultures.

If more frequent references have been made to Southern redactors it is only because they have a recension of about 99,000 verses against that of about 83,000 verses of the Northern ones. The Critical Edition has arrived at the Constituted Text running into about 73,000 verses, so the contribution of the Southerners comes to about 26,000 verses as against that of the Northerners which is about 10,000 verses only.

[1] VI 4†B 3.4, D4.5 Dn M.3-5.

ABBREVIATIONS

ABORI	Annals of the Bandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona
add	adding
BOM	Bombay Edition of the Mahābhārata (Śaka 1799).
B	Bengali Version
Ca	Arjunamiśra's Commentary
Cb	Vimalabodha's Commentary
Cd	Devabodha's Commentary
CHI	Cultural Heritage of India Ramakrishna Mission, Calcutta-19
Cn	Nīlakaṇṭha's Commentary
Cv	Vadirāja's Commentary
D	Devanāgarī Composite Version
Dc	Caturbhuja's Devanāgarī Version
Dn	Nīlakaṇṭha's Devanāgarī Version
Dr	Ratnagarbha's Devanāgarī Version
Ds	Sarvajña Nārāyaṇa's Devanāgarī Version
fol	folio(s)
foll	following
G	Grantha Version
HIL	History of Indian Literature M. Winternitz. Delhi 19
IC	Indian Culture
inf. lin	infra linean (below the line)
ins.	insert(s)
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society
K	Kashmiri Version
Kum. Kumbh	Kumbhakonam Edition of the Mahābhārata
L	Line

LL	Lines
M	Malayalam Verison
MACDONELL	History of Sanskrit Literature by Macdonell. Motilal Banarasidas Delhi.
marg	marginal(ly)
MBh (C)	Mahābhārata—C. Rajgopalachari Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay. 7th Edition 1962.
MBh (D)	Mahābhārata Condensed into English Verse Ma Romesh Chandra Dutt, Kitabistan Allahabad 1944.
MBh (R)	Mahābhārata: Analysis and Index E.P. Rice, Oxford 1934.
Meaning	On the Meaning of the Mahābhārata—V.S. Sukthankar, Asiatic Society of Bombay 1957.
N	Nepali Version
N	Northern Version
Om	Omit(s), omitting
Pr. m.	propria manu (by own hand)
Ś	Śāradā Version
S	Southern Recension
Sec. m.	Secunda manu (by another hand)
SMEI	Sukthankar Memorial Edition Vol. 5, Karnataka Publishing House, Bombay, 1944.
sup. lin	supra lineam (above the line)
supp	supplementary
T	Telugu Version
V	Maithili Version
v	verse
vv	verses
(var)	with variations

Mahabharat

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